

# FORUM PLANNING HANDBOOK

Prepared for study and discussion  
For planning groups of educators and civic leaders

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## Foreword

This Handbook now becomes a bulletin of the U. S. Office of Education. The material was published in its initial form, by the American Association for Adult Education, in cooperation with the U. S. Office of Education.

In his foreword Morse A. Cartwright, Director of the Association, said:

"The demonstration of public-school management of a system of community-wide forums in Des Moines, Iowa, during the last 6 years, supported in large part by a grant from the Carnegie Corporation of New York through the American Association for Adult Education, and the conduct of similar projects in school-managed forum programs in 38 States during the last 3 years with financial assistance from the Federal Government, made available through the Office of Education, formed the basis for general study of specific plans for developing adult civic education under public-school administration.

"This pamphlet, prepared by J. W. Studebaker and C. S. Williams, of the Office of Education, whose leadership in this field is generally recognized, should contribute to the rapid adaptation of the policies and practices of the demonstration projects to local school systems in large numbers of American communities.

"The expressions of opinion contained in this pamphlet are based on the records and materials collected by the authors and represent their conclusions, which are not necessarily the opinions of the staff of the American Association for Adult Education. However, this pamphlet is published and presented to the public and to the educational profession by this Association in cooperation with the Office of Education, with the confidence that the practical suggestions contained in the booklet will advance the cause of adult education to which the Association is devoted."

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## **We address this Handbook to—**

### **1. *Professional educational administrators.***

The experience gained by educational administrators in the demonstrations should be understood by all administrators of public education. This Handbook is addressed to chief State school officers, and to the thousands of city and county superintendents, principals, and supervisors in the American school system.

### **2. *School board members.***

The experience gained in the demonstrations should be understood by the policy-making bodies of local public education whose responsibility it is to apportion public funds for educational purposes in their budgets as they determine general policy for educational programs. This Handbook is addressed to the school board members as a basis for study and discussion of practical local plans for initiating or improving adult civic education under public-school management.

### **3. *Civic leaders.***

The experience gained in the demonstration centers should be understood by the leaders of American life (business, labor, farm, women, youth, social work, church, etc.), particularly in those organizations attempting to promote improvements in our social, economic, and educational life. Our public-school system, founded as it is on democratic principles, moves forward as the citizens generally are prepared to give it support and cooperation.

Hundreds of national leaders in clubs, organizations, and groups of all kinds are asking the question: "What can we do to safeguard and improve American democracy?" This handbook is addressed to them. It contains practical plans by which American public education can help make democracy work. If these plans are understood by the active groups in local communities, the people will find a way of enabling their public schools to finance and manage this kind of citizenship education.



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## Chapter I: What Lies Behind This Handbook?

**P**LANS AND programs come in response to need. Citizens of our democracy have need of greater opportunities for truth-seeking under competent guidance. The people are hungry for increased understanding of the problems which beset them and their communities. They have a right to expect their institutions of education to give them help in their study and discussion of public affairs—of their problems.

The idea of lighting up America's school buildings at night for the conduct of forum meetings where citizens may come to a better understanding of public affairs has caught the imagination of our people with particular force in the last few years. Our citizens have seized upon this idea, (and it is not by any means a new one, having its roots as a matter of fact, in our Revolutionary period) and have recognized in it one important way by which public education and private initiative might safeguard our democratic way of life.

This popular enthusiasm in public forums is a matter of public record. Popular recognition of the importance and significance of free public discussion lies behind this handbook and motivates the planning of school-managed forums.

During the last 3 years 580 local communities in 38 States have conducted public forum demonstrations. To assist in the conduct of these demonstrations, Federal emergency funds were made available by the Office of Education. The local school systems contributed to the cost of the demonstration program and submitted detailed reports on the work accomplished and the problems encountered.

The funds were spent in relatively few communities not to *get done* what is obviously a long-term job in adult education, but to demonstrate practical ways of doing the job. The success of the enterprise is to be judged in part by the extent to which local public education builds up community-wide programs of adult civic education based upon the body of experience created by the demonstrations.

The authors have tried to put into brief and readable form that body of practical experience on which our agencies of public education may build permanent and growing programs for improved citizenship.

Behind the handbook are thousands of pages of reports, the described experiences of hundreds of American educators who have experimented

with tens of thousands of school-managed forums, and the recommendations of educators and civic leaders engaged in the Nation-wide program of demonstrations. Behind this handbook are records of some 36 State Forum Conferences conducted by the State Departments of Education.

Into these pages goes material based on many thousands of letters, thousands of columns of newspaper editorial comment on local demonstrations, and scores of magazine articles.

## The Emphasis

The emphasis in this handbook is placed on *organization* and *administration* of public forums. There are many useful books and pamphlets on forum techniques and discussion methods. Some of these are listed in the appendix.

It must be obvious that good techniques and excellent methods are of little use until they are employed in practical ways through organization of definite programs. Moreover, as we grapple with the problems of managing free and fair public discussion we shall improve our techniques and our methods through experimentation, study, and observation. The important thing is to organize a program that will reach a significant and if possible a constantly growing proportion of the community.

The fact that this handbook deals with the practical ways by which our public agencies of education may create and manage public forums does not argue against private initiative in this field. The need for public affairs education in our democracy is so vast and the potential audience so large, that there is ample opportunity for both public and private enterprise in the operation of plans for public discussion. The role of the public-school system in the management of community forums is complementary to the role of private groups and of other public agencies such as universities and libraries. Because the job to be done is a community enterprise, the organizations, public or private, which undertake it, should counsel with one another, seeking to cooperate in reaching the maximum number of people with high quality programs.

## What the Schools Have to Offer

The forum demonstrations were illustrations of local public-school systems doing the job as their present leadership thinks it should be done. In practically all the demonstrations, citizens' advisory committees were formed to counsel with the school superintendents and those working directly in the forum program. The leaders and the subjects to be dis-



cussed were selected by local educational authorities. This handbook, therefore, is based on what *has* happened in selected communities under the general management of the public-school systems.

The question has frequently been asked: "Why have the funds been allocated in practically every case to those agencies responsible primarily at the present time for elementary and secondary education?" Some people have felt that the State universities might be in a better position effectively to manage a program of public discussion. The fact that in only one or two instances were universities given the administrative responsibility for the demonstrations does not imply a lack of confidence in the universities as managers of public forum programs. In some States and communities special provisions are made for adult education and in some cases there are several divisions of the general administration of public education, such as: Elementary, secondary, vocational education, adult education, etc. We recognize such existing forms of organization by the term, *public-school system*. There were certain definite reasons for promoting the demonstrations largely through public-school authorities. These reasons are:

1. *Jurisdiction*.—The public-school system is located in every community. It has under its jurisdiction the public-school buildings. The buildings are located in various parts of the community within walking distance (in most cases) of the school children. Many of these buildings are now equipped with suitable meeting halls for adults. All of them should be. They are owned by the people and may be used to pay important adult educational dividends if they are opened at night for adult forums.

The public-school system has the natural responsibility for organizing educational programs to be paid for by public funds. The press, radio, private groups, political parties, and organizations of many kinds contribute to American culture. They all carry a certain amount of educational responsibility. But it seems obvious that the institution which is specifically chartered by the public to manage organized education should accept a major responsibility for organizing those kinds of *adult* education which the people want to support as a public enterprise.

2. *Administration*.—The public-school system is locally and (on the whole) democratically guided and directed by the citizenry. The needs and interests of the people can be quickly expressed to a management which is close to them and responsive to the will of the people of the locality.

The public-school system has experience in managing educational programs involving the use of its facilities and cooperative relations with community groupings. The relationship between these groupings and



the management of public education will grow closer as the forum becomes a community institution.

The public-school system has a professionally trained staff for the promotion of educational work. Without materially increasing the cost of education to the community, members of this staff, librarians, business managers, public relations experts, principals, teachers, and custodians can contribute to the forum enterprise. They are already engaged in a going concern. Their service to the adult community will help to protect their status as public servants and to win public support for proposals involving the improvement of their status.

The public-school system has a natural, efficient, and inexpensive way of reaching homes served by the schools. For example, notices of the forums can be carried to homes by school children.

3. *School improvement.*—The public-school system seeks to build community and neighborhood loyalty to the schools. This effort can be more successful as the schools increasingly promote adult education. The forum brings the people who pay for the school system into the school buildings, thus associating the adults with the children in an interest in this public institution. When they go into the schools week after week the citizens of the neighborhood have a chance to inspect their property and to see some of the work of the children on display. They meet one another as parents and co-owners of the institution and usually become acquainted with the teachers who find the forum one way by which to increase their professional efficiency and to vitalize their thinking.

The public-school system needs a sympathetic and understanding public if it is to deal with significant controversial problems in the classroom and to improve the teaching of social studies. If the public school runs forums fairly and impartially, it will convince the public that it is a dependable and responsible agency for promoting free inquiry into controversial questions in the classroom. Moreover, as the adults experience the values of free "give-and-take" discussion they will more readily give sanction to the same kind of treatment of public affairs in the full-time school.

The public-school system needs more and more to unite the interests of younger and older people and to create a community acceptance of the principle of "life-long learning." Young people come to regard the evening forum as an enterprise of their school. They take pride in it and encourage their parents to attend. They find themselves discussing important questions with their parents and older people generally. Parent and child have a common interest in the school. They are both using it to increase their understandings. The young people of the community gradually discard the idea that the school is a place to "go to, and graduate from."

The public-school system as the chief agency for the training of democratic citizens must have at its center a practical philosophy of democratic education. This philosophy is given practical expression in the forum, in free discussion. The frequent forum in the school building will give nourishment to the thinking of professional educators concerning their daily responsibilities. The forum stands as a challenge to uncritical thinking, dogmatic instruction, prejudice, and one-sided propaganda. The public-school institution which undertakes to manage free forums for adults is likely to improve its techniques and methods in the management of democratic education for young people. Forums for young people in the high schools are the natural outgrowth of school-managed forums for adults. This has happened.

There are other reasons why the public-school system offers a logical medium for the development of adult civic education through forums. The ones stated, however, will suffice to explain the emphasis in this handbook, which has been stressed in the demonstrations.

### Questions for Discussion and Study

The questions at the end of each chapter are not necessarily answered in this handbook. Some of them will require reference to other materials and publications. Others can only be answered by a study of local situations or by local authorities. The discussion leader using this handbook as the basis for conducting conference meetings of educational or civic leaders will do well to add questions of his own to these short lists. The primary question before the group is: **WHAT CAN WE DO TO DEVELOP FORUMS IN OUR COMMUNITY?**

1. What should be the role of the public-school system in organizing and managing forums in our community?
2. What obstacles are in the way of the realization of school-sponsored forums?
3. What is the background of the local school system in the development of community-wide educational programs?
4. Are the public-school buildings suitable and convenient meeting places? Can they be improved for this purpose?
5. What phases of forum work are emphasized in this handbook? Why? Where may discussion of other phases be found? What group or groups in our community may be able to help us understand the problem of forum organization from their experience?
6. Do the public schools have a responsibility for civic enlightenment of adults?
7. Is it practical to suggest that public-school forums for adults will influence and improve teaching generally? How?
8. What sources do we have for further information about the demonstration projects assisted by the Office of Education?



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## Chapter II: Steps in Local Forum Planning

**L**EARNING IN an organized way calls for competent teaching or leadership. Organized education to serve the needs of large numbers of learners requires expert management. Good teaching and direction cost something.

It is sometimes assumed that because of reduced school budgets or inadequate support for regular elementary and secondary school needs, it is impossible to make even a beginning in the development of adult civic education through forums. A beginning can be made as the initial steps shown below indicate, but it should not be inferred that desirable programs of community forums can be regularly operated without adequate financial support.

Arranged below are a number of steps which lead from simple and inexpensive plans toward more elaborate programs requiring liberal budgets. Each succeeding step assumes that the previous step or steps have been taken. This particular arrangement of the elements which go to make up a comprehensive community-wide forum program is devised to suggest ways by which local education can move forward in this phase as rapidly as public interest and financial support will permit. Each school system can, if it chooses, make some progress in this field.

### Step Number 1

#### Opening the School Buildings for Public Meetings and Forums

Any local school system can take this step toward promoting public enlightenment through discussion. If the budget will not stand the cost of light, heat, and janitor service at first, these costs can be estimated and the school auditoriums and meeting halls of various sizes can be made available for public meetings to groups of citizens for fees sufficient to cover the expenses involved. The announcement of the policy of the school board with regard to the use of public-school meeting places should be made periodically through the various means of communication, but particularly to the leaders of organized groups known to be interested in the sponsorship of public affairs forums.

Legal provisions with regard to the use of school buildings for public



meetings have been made in all but 13 States. However, there are some school authorities that do not encourage the use of schools for the specific purpose of public affairs forums or discussion groups. In 14 States the school boards are given full authority to determine what use may be made of school buildings after school hours. Among the typical provisions made either by State law or local regulations for the handling of public meetings in school buildings the following are given:<sup>1</sup>

1. Application must be made in advance for the use of the meeting places. In some cases discretionary power may be exercised by the Board of Education in the granting of permits, while in others (Kansas, for example) the conditions under which the building may be used are specifically prescribed and the authorities are prohibited from refusing requests properly presented.
2. Where a series of meetings is scheduled the audiences must be of sufficient size to justify the lighting and heating of the auditorium assigned.
3. In some cases the organization or group must pay a fee for light, heat, and janitor service.
4. Usually the group or organization sponsoring the meeting may not sell tickets, and meetings for profit cannot be held in the buildings. (But collections are sometimes permitted outside the hall or announcements may be made concerning donations for the support of the forum.)
5. In 21 States provisions are made for the use of school buildings for political meetings. In some cases regulations prohibit meetings for political propaganda at which only one side is represented.

The technical observance of a State law or a local regulation making school buildings available for educational and recreational programs for adults should be augmented by the direct encouragement of particular kinds of meetings judged by the local school authorities to be in the public interest. Occasional reminders of the availability of the school buildings for such meetings and the positive expression of approval for their conduct will sometimes inspire civic-minded groups to sponsor forums.

## Step Number 2

### Organizing Citizens' Forum Committees

Having arranged to open the schools for adult forums and encouraged the use of them as meeting places, a second step may be taken without burdening the school budget. The school authorities may appoint a citizens' forum committee to be responsible for the actual promotion of public forums on public affairs. Such a committee should represent, so

<sup>1</sup> For examples of State laws see "The Civic Center Act of the State School Code of the State of California" and "The Michigan Community Center Law."

far as possible, the broad civic and educational interests of the community including representatives from such groups as business and labor, women's groups, churches, parent-teacher and youth groups, social workers, and farm organizations in rural areas.

The members of the committee should familiarize themselves with the literature in the field of adult civic education and thus be in a position to promote the sponsorship of discussion meetings which will employ the best forum techniques.

The volunteer services of laymen interested in this kind of program, of principals or teachers, may be secured by such a committee. With part-time help of volunteers, the committee may serve cooperating organizations by conducting a speakers' bureau, collecting literature and visual aids, and promoting effective library-forum relations.

The committee itself may elect to sponsor a series of forums. In some cases community forums have been undertaken as special projects by groups of high-school or college students.<sup>2</sup> These students with the help and guidance of teachers or professors have been responsible for some or all of the following activities and services.

1. The conduct of a speakers' bureau to collect information about volunteer speakers or leaders on various subjects making it available to program chairmen.
2. Preparation of exhibits and visual aids for specific forums based on studies undertaken by student groups, the significant aspects of which are put into graphic form by students in art classes.
3. Preparation of research materials for study circles and informal small group discussions.
4. Preparation of publicity.
5. Participation in the meetings as members of panels, debaters, or leaders of symposiums, and the conduct of radio discussions, round tables and town halls.

With a little encouragement and inspiration from the school authorities, civic-minded citizens, teachers, and students can make a good beginning in the formation of a forum program. The responsibility of leadership and presentation can be distributed among volunteers who live in the general area and who have special competency in certain phases of public affairs. Local, regional and national radio forums, round tables and debates can be effectively used as the bases for group discussions in the schools.

Such a program will represent the social vision of those older and younger people in the community who see the necessity for doing something definite to help make democracy work. The cost in financial terms is neg-

<sup>2</sup> Refer to *Forums for Young People* listed in bibliography.



ligible. Therefore, whether this much is done or not depends upon whether the local educational and civic leadership sees the need for it and acts.

*Examples of projects depending primarily on citizens' advisory committees and volunteer direction and leadership<sup>3</sup>*

Birmingham, Ala.—December 1938 to March 1939.

Boulder, Colo.—July 1938 to March 1939 (The forums sponsored by the schools were given support and guidance by the Adult Education Council.)

### Types of Committees

A school-sponsored forum program may require the organization of two types of citizens' committees. In places where only one weekly forum is being conducted there need be only one committee. However, in communities where several neighborhood forums in different parts of the school district or area are being operated regularly, there may be a central citizens' committee and, in addition, committees for each of the neighborhood forums.

Persons who represent important civic and educational organizations and groups would be selected to sit on the central committee. This committee would be concerned with advising the school authorities and professional specialists directly responsible for the organization of the program on such matters as (1) promotion; (2) selection of forum leaders or speakers; (3) scheduling of meetings to avoid conflicts with other community functions and to reach, as far as possible, the different sections of the district; (4) selection of general topics for discussion, particularly where it seems advisable to engage all of the forum audiences in discussion of certain problems or issues; and (5) special problems in forum administration.

The local neighborhood committees are formed primarily to guide the development of the discussion program in various neighborhoods or sections of the community. Such committees are made up, so far as possible, of persons who are interested in a particular forum operated in their neighborhood. It is wise, of course, to constitute these neighborhood sponsoring committees so that different points of view and interests are well represented. It is of primary importance, however, that these neighborhood committees have on them the "live wires" of the districts who are eager to see the series of meetings in their localities succeed. These committees will meet more frequently and be more active than the central committee.

<sup>3</sup> See page 61 for names of school authorities in charge of projects.



Among the activities of the neighborhood committees the following are typical: (1) to send representatives to the central committee; (2) to select the chairman for the individual meetings; (3) to counsel with the forum leader, or director, or chairman on the selection of subjects or topics; (4) to prepare for the meetings in consultation with the forum leader, director, or chairman.

This additional reference to the formation of citizens' committees is made in anticipation of steps 3, 4, 5, and 6, involving paid leadership. It should be particularly noted that the introduction of paid leadership increases rather than decreases the need for citizens' committees and participation in planning.

## Step Number 3

### Employ a Forum Leader-Director

The records accumulated during the past 3 years indicate clearly that competent leadership for public forums is considered by educators and other civic leaders to be of primary importance. It is therefore necessary that the third step, which calls for investment of money for personnel, be taken as soon as it is financially possible, since the kind and amount of leadership needed to insure the continued success and growth of community forums cannot be secured entirely on a volunteer basis.

This step may be taken by one community with its own resources or cooperatively by several communities, located near one another, which pool resources and share the time of a forum leader-director.<sup>4</sup>

The employment of a person, usually on a full-time basis, whom we have called a "forum leader-director", may extend the service of the public schools in the field of adult education in one of several different directions.

A. The person selected may be primarily a *director* or coordinator of public discussion programs encouraged by the public-school system. He may not be particularly qualified himself to lead public forum meetings. It is, of course, possible to secure this type of leadership at a smaller salary than is required to employ a competent forum leader. Among the duties of such a forum director the following are typical:

1. To arrange the schedules for the use of meeting halls.
2. To publicize the forums being held and promote attendance.
3. To secure local speakers and leaders.

<sup>4</sup> See Chapters III and IV.

4. To counsel with neighborhood committees on forum plans, techniques, choice of subjects, etc.
5. To promote good library-forum relations.
6. To give supervisory assistance to high-school teachers of social studies in the arrangement and conduct of forums for young people.
7. To coordinate generally and serve the community groups and committees referred to in Step No. 2.

Many of these things will be accomplished by community or neighborhood committees with the help of the director. His major responsibility is suggested by the last point. An active committee is basic to a good forum program and an evidence of skillful direction.

#### *Examples*

Little Rock, Ark.—September 1937 to March 1939 (Part-time director)

San Antonio, Tex.—February 1938 to March 1939 (Part-time responsibility of the public-school director of night schools)

Cincinnati, Ohio—February 1937 to July 1938 (Director of night schools, part-time; full-time assistant).

- B. The person selected may be primarily a *forum leader* whose services are given general direction by volunteers referred to in Step No. 2. He may, therefore, be expected to conduct five or six regular forum meetings per week in the community or group of communities involved. His schedule and the supporting activities as well as the publicity would be worked out by those volunteering their services for this purpose in cooperation with the citizens' forum committees.

A forum leader is not merely a lecturer or speaker.<sup>5</sup> He comes to the community with a broad training and experience in the field of public affairs as well as a special competency in the guidance of fruitful group discussion. He meets with the same forum groups frequently, (once each week), presenting in brief form basic analyses of various topics of public concern and then guiding a process of free discussion on these topics. It is his responsibility to help his forum groups explore the subjects under consideration and not merely to deliver speeches.

One of his tasks is to clarify and interpret conflicting points

<sup>5</sup> Some forum leaders depend almost entirely on panels, audience preparation, and local speakers for the presentation side of the forum, acting themselves in the capacity of discussion leader.



of view or alternative proposals which should be understood as a basis for intelligent discussion. He may bring to his aid panels of local citizens having different points of view. He may often use exhibits, visual aids, maps, or motion pictures. He is not engaged in *converting his audiences to his opinions or to a point of view considered desirable by the school board or by any other group in the community*. He is rather engaged in a high-grade teaching process, the end result of which is a critical and many-sided analysis of real public problems for the purpose of enlightening public opinion.

It is not always possible to find persons who combine the ability to present subject matter and also to guide good discussion. It is sometimes suggested that a full-time or part-time forum *discussion leader* should have only the responsibility of conducting the discussion period of the forum. In such a case it is the responsibility of the employed person to arrange for the presentation part of the programs by securing volunteer speakers, debaters, or participants in symposiums.<sup>6</sup>

#### *Examples*

Cooperative Demonstration Centers—January 1938 to July 1938<sup>7</sup>  
Alabama, Mississippi, Louisiana, Illinois, Indiana, Michigan, Pennsylvania, Virginia, South Carolina, Oklahoma, New Mexico, Arizona, Wyoming, Idaho, Montana, Vermont, New Jersey, Kentucky.

Cooperative Demonstration Centers—October 1938 to March 1939  
Mississippi, South Carolina, New Jersey, Rhode Island, North Dakota, Michigan, New Mexico, Utah.

- C. The *director* and *leader* responsibilities may be combined in one person. When this is done it is important to lay particular stress on the qualifications of applicants for the role of forum leader which is the more difficult of the two responsibilities.<sup>8</sup>

#### *Examples*

Georgia—October 1938 to March 1939  
New Hampshire—February 1936 to July 1937  
West Virginia—February 1936 to July 1937

<sup>6</sup> For a detailed description of various types of forum meetings and techniques see "Discussion Methods—Explained and Illustrated"; also "Education for Democracy" and pages 77 to 80, "Choosing Our Way." (See complete list of publications in Appendix.)

<sup>7</sup> See page 63 for detailed list by States.

<sup>8</sup> In a number of projects listed as examples the forum leaders, while not technically responsible for directorial work, served to some extent in this capacity because the school authorities scheduling the meetings delegated to them some managerial tasks. It should be noted that in the projects given as examples under Step 3, A, B, and C, Steps 1 and 2 had already been taken, that is, the schools were opened for public meetings, and citizens' advisory committees were formed.



## Step Number 4

### Employing Both Director and Leaders

Where it is financially possible, it is desirable to employ one or more regular full-time forum leaders each to conduct 5 or 6 community or neighborhood forums per week and *in addition* to employ a full-time or part-time director. When this step is taken it is assumed that the suggestions contained in the previous steps will be even more effectively utilized.

#### *Examples*

Minnesota—September 1936 to July 1937; October 1938 to March 1939  
Wisconsin—February 1937 to July 1937; October 1938 to March 1939  
California—September 1936 to July 1937; October 1938 to March 1939  
Washington—September 1936 to July 1937; October 1938 to March 1939  
Oregon—September 1936 to July 1937; October 1938 to March 1939  
Georgia—September 1936 to July 1937; October 1938 to March 1939  
Colorado—February 1936 to July 1937  
West Virginia—February 1936 to July 1937  
Pennsylvania—February 1937 to July 1937  
New York—October 1938 to March 1939

Some demonstrations employed *forum leader-directors* as well as one or more additional leaders. These projects were:

North Carolina—February 1937 to July 1937  
West Virginia—February 1936 to July 1937  
Tennessee—September 1936 to July 1937  
California—September 1936 to January 1937  
Connecticut—February 1937 to July 1937  
Arkansas—September 1936 to January 1937  
Texas—February 1937 to July 1937

In these cases the forum leader-director usually conducted less than a full schedule of meetings per week devoting part of his time to directorial work involving the scheduling and promotion of all meetings. In some cases the forum leader-director attempted to carry a full schedule as well as to direct the program. This may be possible for a short time but is generally considered too much of a burden.

## Step Number 5

### Adding Short-Term Leaders

It is sometimes difficult to secure a full-time leader on a semester or academic year basis who is capable of handling the discussion of certain

types of subject matter. It is found practical, however, to secure the services of certain leaders for one or at most a few weeks. Moreover, variety may be given to the program by bringing in such short-term leaders.

For example: A leader may be brought to the community for five forums in different parts of the area to discuss a vital subject concerning which he has special competency by virtue of his recent travels or present full-time occupation. Or one leader may be brought in for five forums to present his point of view on a controversial issue to be followed the next week by another leader who appears before the same forums to present a contrary point of view.

Most of the projects employed both long-term and short-term forum leaders. It was sometimes difficult to secure the person desired for a semester or longer when this involved securing a leave of absence from his regular post. Hence, such a person would be employed for only a week or two. Some administrators wanted to enliven the program by presenting as many different leaders as possible, but they encountered difficulty in getting some professors from colleges unless they were able to keep them for a full semester. The scheduling of a speaker for a week or two to argue his personal point of view to be followed by another speaker for a similar length of time on the same circuit to argue the opposite point of view was rarely attempted.<sup>9</sup>

*Examples (short-term leaders)*

Des Moines, Iowa—January 1938 to March 1939

Washington—February 1937 to July 1937

Colorado—February 1936 to July 1937

New York—September 1936 to July 1937

Pennsylvania—February 1937 to July 1937

Tennessee—September 1936 to July 1937

New Hampshire—February 1936 to July 1937

Connecticut—February 1937 to July 1937

Oregon—September 1936 to July 1937

California—September 1936 to July 1937

The shorter the term of service the greater is the cost per meeting for the leadership as a rule. The compensation must take into account reasonable travel expenses to the locality as well as the expense to the leader caused by temporary residence. The forum leader who is employed for an entire year can accept a monthly salary which will make the cost of leadership per meeting somewhere in the neighborhood of \$15 to \$30. A person who comes to the community for only one week may require a fee for the week ranging from \$150 to \$400 or \$500 for five meetings.

<sup>9</sup> See *The American Way* by J. W. Studebaker. Pages 52-53.



## Step Number 6

### Using Forum Lecturers

The forum program may be further elaborated by the scheduling of a series of large community-wide meetings featuring outstanding speakers for only one engagement. Sometimes it is possible to schedule debates between prominent public men. The fees for these single appearances range from \$25 to \$1,500. A few lecturers have been able to command fees as high as \$3,000 for a single meeting. The more usual fee is in the neighborhood of \$100 to \$200. In order to justify such expensive leadership in a forum program it is necessary to plan for large audiences. Such meetings bring to the community well-known personalities who are capable of stimulating thought about their subjects and of inspiring interest in them. The use of panels of local citizens and the conduct of a question period may characterize this type of forum. There is naturally little opportunity for real discussion or audience exploration of the subject.<sup>10</sup>

#### *Examples*

Des Moines, Iowa—September 1937 to March 1939  
Holyoke, Mass.—September 1937 to March 1939  
Roselle Park, N. J.—September 1937 to March 1939  
Minneapolis, Minn.—February 1937 to July 1937  
Waco, Tex.—February 1937 to July 1937

Scores of public-school systems in California and most forums under various sponsorships rely almost entirely on lecturers paid on the fee basis. However, this does not represent an elaboration of a community-wide program including forum leaders and directors and short-term leaders.

In addition to these steps public-school systems may adapt a procedure which has been successfully sponsored by the universities, namely, the *Institute*. With a relatively small budget a group of leaders of different types may be brought to the community for a few days or a week to conduct a concentrated series of meetings on public affairs, thus providing the basis for the type of forum program outlined in steps 1 and 2.

The Institute has been particularly successful in rural communities if held during those seasons when farmers are relatively free to participate. They have been used extensively in the North and Middle West. If such an Institute is prepared for as a basis for stimulating an extensive program of locally led forums it has significance for several months after it is held.

<sup>10</sup> *Ibid.*, pages 55-57.

## Questions for Discussion and Study

1. What is the situation in the community with respect to the use of school buildings for public meetings and forums?
2. Has the public-school system encouraged public discussion by (a) stimulating the use of schools as meeting places and (b) forming citizens' advisory committees to work on the problem? Can these steps be taken? How? What problems are involved?
3. Can the community afford to secure the full-time or part-time of a competent forum leader or director? What other nearby communities might share the cost of such leadership and the time of the employed person? What would it cost us and the other communities?
4. What are the advantages and disadvantages of securing forum leaders for short periods? For long periods of a semester or more?
5. What are the functions of a forum leader? Of a leader-director? Of a director? Which of the three types of leadership would best fit our local situation?
6. What values may be derived from securing a few outstanding speakers for community-wide meetings? Should this be added later to our program or is the sponsorship of such meetings a desirable way to make a beginning? Are there other groups in the community operating the lecture-question type of forum?
7. What are the possibilities of the Institute for our community?
8. What resources do we have for volunteer leadership? How can we acquaint such volunteers with the discussion method?
9. If we make a 5-year plan, how much of it should we try to accomplish the first year?
10. What are the main qualifications of a good forum leader?



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## Chapter III: Small Communities Pool Resources

**T**HIS CHAPTER attempts to summarize the experience of local education in cooperative forum organization, and to suggest plans by which hundreds of small communities may gain the benefits of well-administered and well-led forums at relatively low cost.

Many school districts are so small that efficient administration of elementary and secondary schools is difficult to secure. Such small districts encounter even greater difficulties in the management of adult education than in the administration of the regular school program, partly because only a limited percentage of the adults can be counted upon for enrollment in classes or attendance at public forums. The question arises, then: "How can relatively small communities plan and operate civic forums?"

It seems logical to assume that if small school districts individually cannot afford or justify by public response full-time administration and leadership, several school districts will find it mutually profitable to pool their resources and share the time of competent personnel. Such pooling of resources and sharing of leadership has characterized most of the demonstrations sponsored by the Office of Education during the past 2 years.

### Relation of Planning to Population

It is obvious that large population centers can both afford more forums and better support them by attendance than small communities. But there is no formula for determining the ratio of forum meetings to population. The earlier demonstrations were based, in general, on a ratio of 1 regular forum per week for each 6,000 adult population, and it was assumed that about 100 people would attend the weekly forum. Of course, the actual ratio of population to attendance was different in various parts of the country and even within given counties. While the budgets suggested in the following pages refer frequently to the population factor, it should be clear at the outset that no formula can be based on population which will satisfy the facts and conditions faced by local planning groups.

In communities where there are few cultural and educational attractions, where leisure time is inadequately served by organized programs, or where the competition for adult interest is not very keen, forums will

attract better audiences than in much larger places where the appeals for the time of the people are greater. Likewise, in communities where there is a tradition in support of adult education, where a few leaders have nurtured a desire for civic enlightenment, where the press is progressively promoting civic endeavor, where the schooling level is relatively high among the adults, where racial or religious differences are not exaggerated, where schools are important community organizations, or where the economic classes mingle in mutually interesting activities—in such communities there is likely to be a greater readiness for forums than in places where these factors are not found in high degree.

It was discovered in the demonstration programs that in many small towns and cities the attendance at forums led by the same leaders who conducted discussion meetings in larger cities, was numerically larger and proportionately much greater. For example, in one town of about 1,800 population, the weekly forum drew an attendance of from 75 to 150, while the same leader with the same topics would meet audiences ranging from 50 to 100 in another city in the same area having a population of 25,000. The factors which account for such variations are too numerous to discuss.<sup>1</sup>

People have different views of what constitutes largeness and smallness. Those who live in cities of 25,000 or even 50,000 near such metropolitan centers as New York and Chicago consider their cities small. Other people who live in towns of only a few thousand in sparsely settled areas think of their urban centers as "big towns."

When we refer to "small communities" here, we take into consideration other factors than mere population. We realize that some towns of only a few thousand population are so located in relation to a rural community that for practical purposes additional thousands of people for miles around can be counted on to participate in the town activities. Likewise, we are aware that some communities having much larger populations cannot count upon the adults for many local activities because these adults regard the nearby metropolis as the cultural center.

We can only suggest that in applying the plans set forth here each local school management and civic group should study the local situation and try to make the plans fit what is found to exist. In general, these plans apply to two main views of "smallness." One view is based on the population census. Communities under 25,000 population in most cases will find it necessary to pool resources with surrounding towns if they are to support a forum program served by competent and paid leadership. The other view is based on a conception of financial and civic preparedness. The community of more than 25,000 population or even 100,000 population may not be ready to undertake a forum program involving the number

<sup>1</sup> See *Choosing Our Way*.



of meetings per week which might ultimately be required. The leadership of such relatively large communities can make a beginning through cooperative planning with nearby towns as we outline here.

### Sharing a Full-Time Leader

The emphasis in the 1938-39 programs sponsored by the Office of Education was placed on the problem of organizing and administering forums in communities with populations between 1,000 and 25,000.

The cooperative forum demonstrations have sought to provide a practical plan by which a leader serving on a full-time basis, may be shared by several school districts. The plan shows how an outstanding leader of public discussion may be jointly employed for full-time work in a number of communities located near each other at a salary that will attract able leaders without placing a larger burden of expense on any one community.

This program created an administrative pattern which usually associated four or more relatively small communities in a general area for the purpose of sharing one full-time forum leader.

The "cooperative forums" were based on the following principles:

#### Distribution of Leader's Time

1. Communities under 5,000—one meeting every other week (or weekly meetings for half of the period needed for a bi-weekly schedule).
2. Communities with populations ranging from 5,000 to 15,000—one meeting per week.
3. Communities with populations over 15,000—two meetings per week.

### Administrative Responsibility

Each superintendent participating in the cooperative set-up was responsible for the meetings conducted in the community under his educational jurisdiction. The several superintendents formed a committee and selected one of their number to act as chairman. This committee decided upon the weekly schedule of the forum leader and certain promotional plans of a general nature. This committee also delegated the responsibility for investigating the qualifications of possible leaders and agreed upon the leader or leaders to be invited to conduct the meetings.

Figure I shows how this pattern was applied to a group of communities in New Mexico.

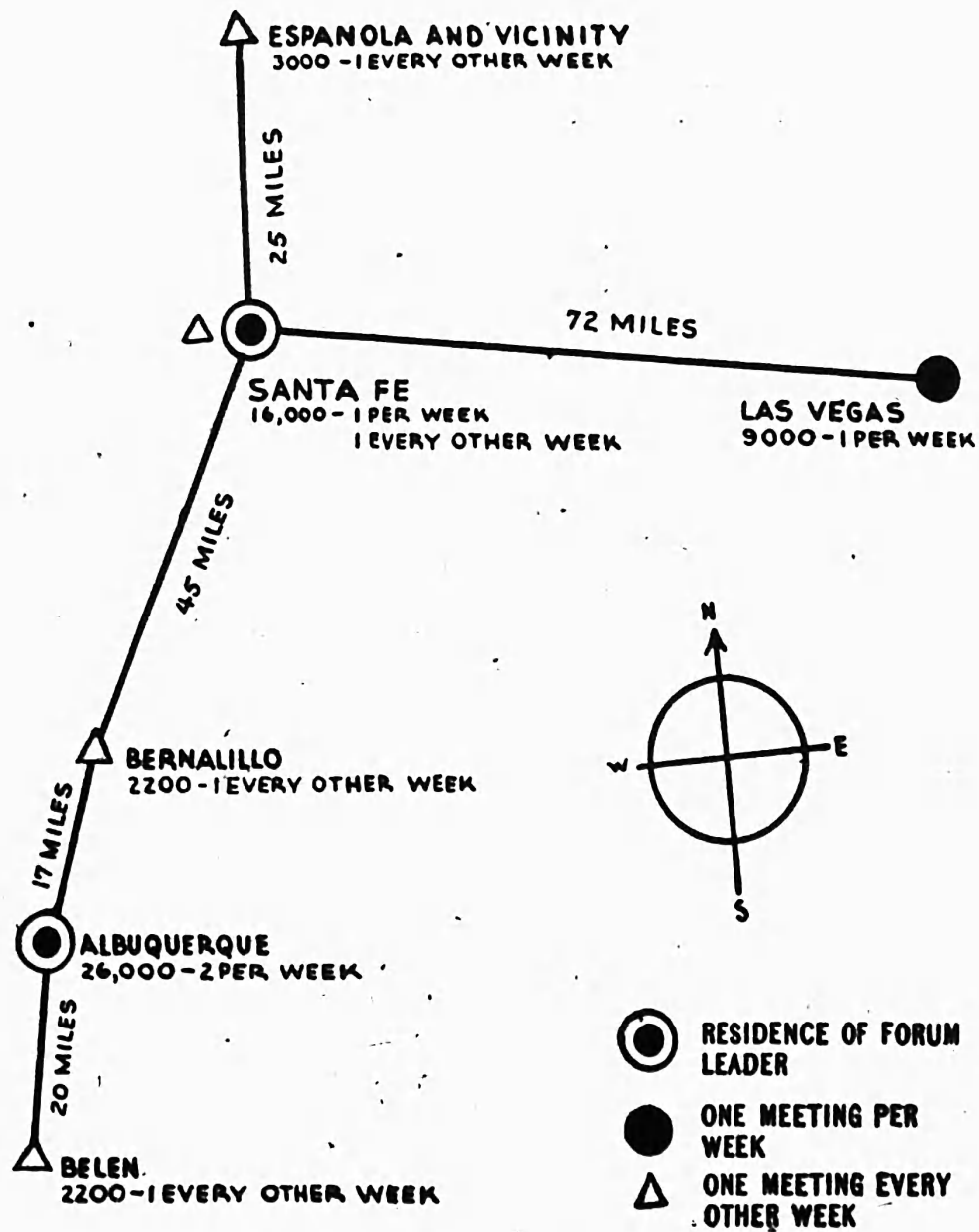


FIGURE I.—NEW MEXICO DEMONSTRATION

The leader resides half of the week in one place conducting meetings in towns in that area and the other half of the week in the second place to be near the towns in that area.



## Sample Schedule and Costs

*Schedule of meetings*

	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	* Friday	Saturday
First week	Santa Fe	Las Vegas	Espanola	Albuquerque	Belen	Albuquerque
Second week	Santa Fe	Las Vegas	Santa Fe	Albuquerque	Bernalillo	Albuquerque

*Budget— 34 weeks' program*

1 forum leader (full-time) .....	\$5,000
Contingent expenses (including travel) .....	500
Total .....	5,500

*Apportionment*

Town	Number of meetings	Population	Cost
Santa Fe .....	51	16,000	\$1,375 00
Las Vegas .....	34	9,000	916 67
Albuquerque .....	68	26,000	1,833 31
Espanola .....	17	3,000	458 34
Belen .....	17	2,200	458 34
Bernalillo .....	17	2,200	458 34
Total .....	204	58,400	5,500 00

This estimated budget is on the basis of 34 weeks although the New Mexico project was actually operated for only 12 weeks with three different leaders serving 4 weeks each.

The suggested amount in the budget for contingent expenses may be inadequate for cooperative forum centers where the distances between the cooperating communities are great and where the cost of transportation of forum leaders to meetings would be proportionately higher.

## Variations

There are, of course, innumerable variations of this general pattern of cooperative organization. The sharing of full-time leadership may be carried out with a director instead of a forum leader as suggested in Step No. 3. The budget might be much lower in this case as it is possible to secure the manager of a discussion program at a smaller salary than the full-time leader who should be an "artist" or expert in group discussion.

The figure of \$5,000 per year for a forum leader is merely for the purpose of illustration. But it is approximately the compensation that will attract good forum leaders to a community program, and the figure is low rather than high. On the other hand, it is quite possible to secure an able coordinator of a forum program to manage the details of the

schedules and the publicity at approximately half this amount or even less. The employment of a forum leader seems the most desirable. Nevertheless, the employment of a director, responsible for organizing the local resources of the communities involved, represents a good beginning.

The same plan of cooperative organization can be used in employing a leader-director. In this case, where the time of the leader is divided between conducting forums and giving direction to forums led by volunteers, it is necessary to plan the schedule of meetings differently. The leader-director may lead only three meetings a week instead of five or six, and his administrative services to the cooperating communities must be divided on the basis of other types of meetings which he schedules and promotes but does not lead himself.

A cooperative plan may be extended along the lines suggested in Steps 4, 5, and 6. Budgets for such programs will be found in the next chapter. They will apply as well to groups of communities as to large cities. Those drawing up the budget will have to watch carefully the item for travel which will vary according to the distances between cooperating communities. Transportation in metropolitan areas is not of much consequence and, therefore, the budgets suggested in the next chapter do not contain much for this purpose.

### Cooperative Planning in Densely Populated States

In States where cities and towns are located on good highways only a few miles from each other and where the distances between various parts of the State are not great, the cooperative plan may be extended to include arrangements between groups of school districts for the exchange of forum leaders. Three or four clusters of communities each employing a full-time leader may plan to exchange leaders with one another thus providing for considerable variety in the program by bringing into the communities different personalities during the year. This, of course, represents the same kind of scheduling problem that one faces in a large city where three or four forum leaders are being currently presented. If there is added to this arrangement, the employment of a director to serve the three or four cooperative centers, the result in general is very similar to Step 4.

The best example of this type of cooperative planning may be found in New Jersey where the State Department of Education promoted the association of three groups of communities in different parts of the State and then arranged for the exchange of three forum leaders. Each of the forum centers had the general appearance of the picture given for



New Mexico, except for the distances between communities. (See illustration of the New Jersey plan.)

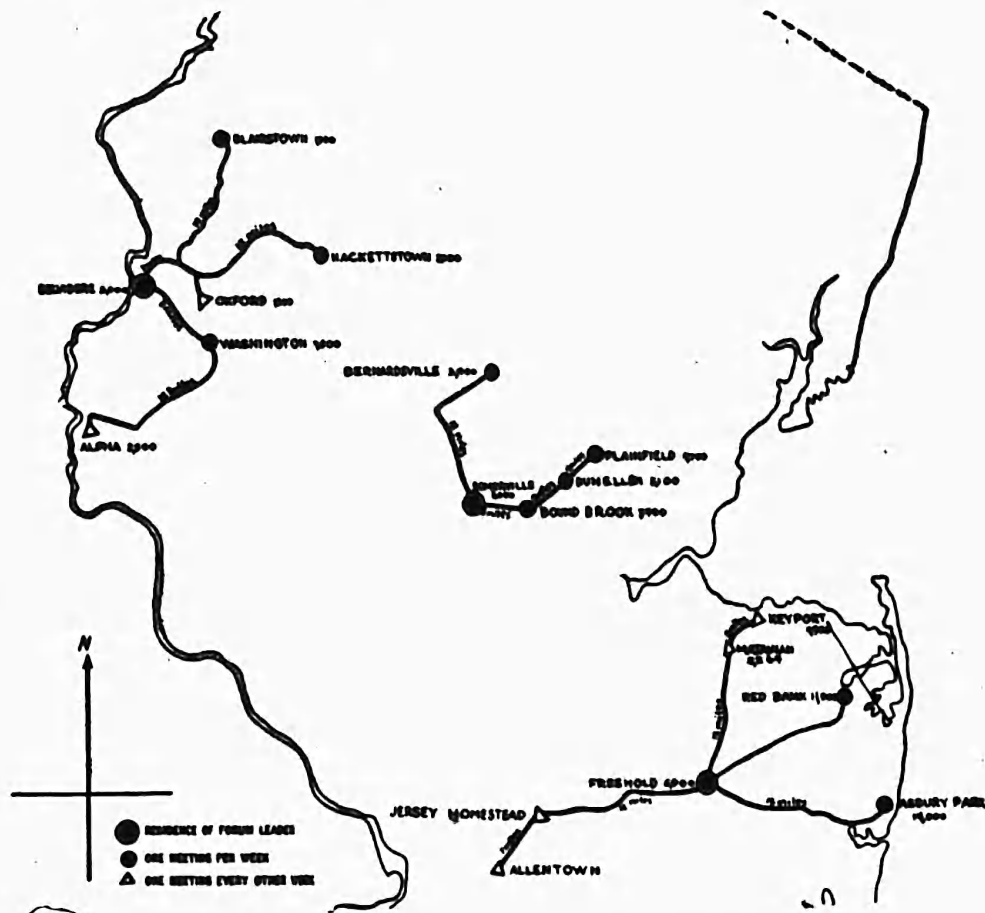


FIGURE II.—NEW JERSEY DEMONSTRATION CENTERS

Towns marked by a double circle indicate the residences of the forum leaders. Each leader conducts meetings for several weeks in each of the centers. The symbols indicate the frequency of meetings.

## Cooperative Planning in Sparsely Settled Areas

In a few States where the total population is not much greater than that in a city, the problem of employing and scheduling forum leaders is most difficult. The distances between urban centers are usually great so that it would not be practical for a forum leader to try to meet with audiences in different places each night. And the populations in the communities may be too small to warrant the holding of several meetings in a single place during one week. In a few places, the Institute may represent the most practical method of introducing the forum and promoting free discussion. But in most sparsely settled States, there are

clusters of towns where the cooperative plan will work relatively well. In many of these States the problem should be studied and discussed as a State affair, involving all of the school districts so that the maximum pooling of resources may take place. This requires some leadership outside the local units of education if comprehensive planning is to be successful.

## Ways to Start Planning

When a given school district decides to operate forums for adults, the planning of the budget, the program, and the schedules are clearly within the jurisdiction of the educational authorities in that district. The organization and planning of cooperative forum schedules and the sharing of paid leadership between communities present a number of real problems. These problems are:

### 1. The calling together of official representatives of several school districts in a given area for the purpose of joint planning.

The initiative for calling such conferences of local school authorities has sometimes been taken by the State departments of education. Where State funds are available for adult education and are certified by the chief State school officer, the officials are in a good position to initiate cooperative plans of this kind. In other cases, a superintendent in one school district will call together a number of his fellow superintendents to confer on practical plans for cooperative management of forums. In still other cases, the person in charge of the university extension service may take the initiative in arranging such conferences in various parts of the State.

### 2. Administration of the cooperative effort.

The representatives of the cooperating school districts may constitute themselves a policy-making committee and select a chairman from among their number. This committee investigates and employs leaders and apportions their time among the various communities involved according to the contribution of each to the budget. The travel expenses of the forum leader are carefully budgeted and prorated on the basis of the number of meetings to be conducted in each community. This is shown in the apportionment table on page 27. The committee may also initiate general publicity concerning the program. Then the responsibility for



arranging, publicizing, and supporting the local meetings is left in the hands of the school authorities and their advisory committees in each school district.

Another method of arranging for administration is less democratic but may be more practical in certain instances. One school system undertakes to employ the forum leader, or leaders, and then to schedule meetings not only in its own district but in surrounding school districts where the educational authorities are prepared to pay a given fee for the service. In this case, the selection of the leader and the development of his schedule are the responsibility of the educational authorities in one district. Usually, the planning and promoting of meetings in each locality is left to each local agency of education. This plan is similar in many respects to cooperative arrangements made by municipalities in providing certain services for other municipalities.

### **3. The arrangement for exchanging forum leaders between cooperative centers, within a State or large area.**

Each group of cooperating authorities having selected a leader, or leaders, may wish to exchange their leader, or leaders, with other centers. In such cases the authorities in one cooperative center will have had no voice in the selection of the leaders employed in the other centers. It is possible, of course, to arrange in advance for the participation of all of the units in the selection of *all* of the leaders. This, however, takes time and complicates the selection process.

Some stress should be laid on the democratic selection of leadership by a local community because it is essential that the leader, having been carefully chosen, be given the full support and confidence of the educational leadership in all communities where he serves. For the same reason that it would be poor policy to have leaders selected in Washington and allocated to serve in local communities, it is unwise to have leaders selected in such a way that each school system does not feel some responsibility for the selection. If criticism should arise in a given community concerning the work of a forum leader, the educational authorities in that community are not likely to take responsibility for the leader if they have had no part in selecting him. Quite frequently, such criticism is unjustified. It is, therefore, important that the educational authorities sponsoring the program do not shift the burden of responsibility, but feel obligated to handle the criticism judiciously and directly.

The democratic selection is a fundamental protection for academic freedom in this field of education because it places responsibility where it belongs—in the hands of local educational authorities.

## Role of the Civic Groups

The initiative for developing cooperative forum centers may come from the civic groups in one community or in several communities. Plans may be developed by committees representing the active democratic forces in a general area and may then be placed before the respective school boards for discussion and consideration. As a result of such a procedure a conference of representatives of the school districts involved may be called. Public participation in the development of such programs is essential. No school system progresses very far in this field without the support and sympathetic understanding of the active community organizations interested in democratic education. In some communities adult education councils or special committees have been primarily responsible for the inauguration of public affairs forums. In other communities, the first steps have been taken by the educational administrators themselves and by their respective school boards.

## County-Wide Cooperatives

In many of the 3,000 counties in the United States there are both a county school system and one or more city school systems. In other cases, the schools in the rural and urban areas are administered by one school board for the county as a whole. A county-wide forum program in the latter case would follow the general pattern of organization in cities to be described in the next chapter. If the population of the county is too small to afford a separate forum program, the same type of cooperative plan may be worked out involving several counties. (The Tri-County Demonstration, headquarters, Morgantown, W. Va., is an example.)

However, we now are interested in the type of planning which may be done in counties where the total population and public support justify a county-wide administration of forums. It is sometimes the case that some of the separate school districts within such a county are not ready to participate in such a program. Therefore, it is necessary for those communities, which are ready, to make cooperative plans as have been suggested above. In counties where all of the school districts are prepared to participate in such a program, they may decide to transfer funds to the county school budget and to set up a county administration for the forum program, under the jurisdiction of the county school board. Or, the office of the county superintendent may be used merely as a common meeting ground for a cooperative committee representing the independent school districts in the area.



## Suggestions for Study

In areas where the cooperative planning of forum programs seems desirable, the educational leaders and the officers of civic and educational organizations may lay the groundwork for practical programs by studies along these lines:

1. Analysis of the financial resources of the communities in the area.
2. A survey of the efforts, both public and private, past and present, to administer some kind of adult civic education program.
3. Study of existing regulations controlling use of public-school funds in the various communities.
4. Investigation into the possibilities of securing State aid or grants.
5. Study and discussion of tentative plans and budgets involving the cooperative organization of a forum program.

## Questions for Discussion and Study

1. Does our community need to plan for cooperative relations with other school districts in order to operate forums?
2. How many forum meetings per year led by paid forum leaders can we afford now?
3. What plan of cooperative administration will meet the needs of communities in our area?
4. Who should take the initiative in calling together representatives of school districts in our area to explore practical plans for a cooperative forum program?
5. Is a county-wide plan practical?
6. What role may the civic groups play in promoting the organization of a cooperative forum program? Should such groups encourage the public-school agencies to accept some responsibility for civic education through forums?
7. For how many weeks should we plan a forum schedule for the first year? What difficulties will we face in securing leadership for short periods? Can arrangements be made with groups of school districts in other parts of the State to share the full-time of a forum leader for an entire year so that each cluster of communities will have only a 6 or 8-week program at first?
8. How much administrative responsibility should be placed on the cooperative committee and how much on the local agency of education and its citizens' committees?

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## Chapter IV: Planning for Cities and their Suburbs

**T**HE PROBLEM of planning forums for metropolitan areas is simplified when the program can be financed and managed by one *school district*. However, it will be necessary in some cases for large city school districts to make cooperative arrangements with separate school authorities having jurisdiction in outlying suburbs or environs if the larger community drawn by economic boundaries rather than the restricted community defined by political boundaries is to be served.

The study of the district to be served by a forum program is important since the schedule should be based upon a thorough analysis of the community. Many forums now operate in halls located in the center of big cities. The plans described here, however, involve the placement of meeting centers in various sections of the city where the forums are easily accessible to the people.

In many cities the high-school buildings, as well as some elementary school buildings, are good meeting places because people within various geographical areas may congregate easily. When forums are held in the high-school buildings the association between the full-time school program and the evening adult program is promoted.

In some of the demonstrations in cities with populations of 100,000 to more than 500,000, 3 to 6 full-time forum leaders were employed. This involved the scheduling of from about 15 to 30 or 36 regular forum meetings per week. Figure III is an example of such scheduling.

In each neighborhood where weekly or fortnightly forums are conducted, citizens' committees should be organized to promote the meetings, assist the forum leader in preparing to meet the needs of the group, and to help coordinate the forum with other neighborhood activities and school affairs. If there are five or more such meeting places, a citizens' advisory committee can be formed by securing representatives from each neighborhood forum. Other community leaders representing such groups as labor, business, farm, women, youth, church, social agencies, etc., may be added. Such citizens' advisory committees can help the forum management in the following ways:

1. To interpret the needs of the community as a whole.
2. To advise and counsel on the selection of subjects for discussion.



3. To promote the program among the organized groups.
4. To interpret the objectives and educational philosophy of the forums to the organized groups of the community.

The confidence of the people in the fairness and impartiality of the management of the forum can be created and sustained by a representative citizens' advisory committee whose members have participated in the planning of the program. Misunderstandings on the part of groups and community leaders can be avoided with the help of such a committee.

Most of the plans outlined in detail below may be adapted to county-wide or cooperative forum organizations.

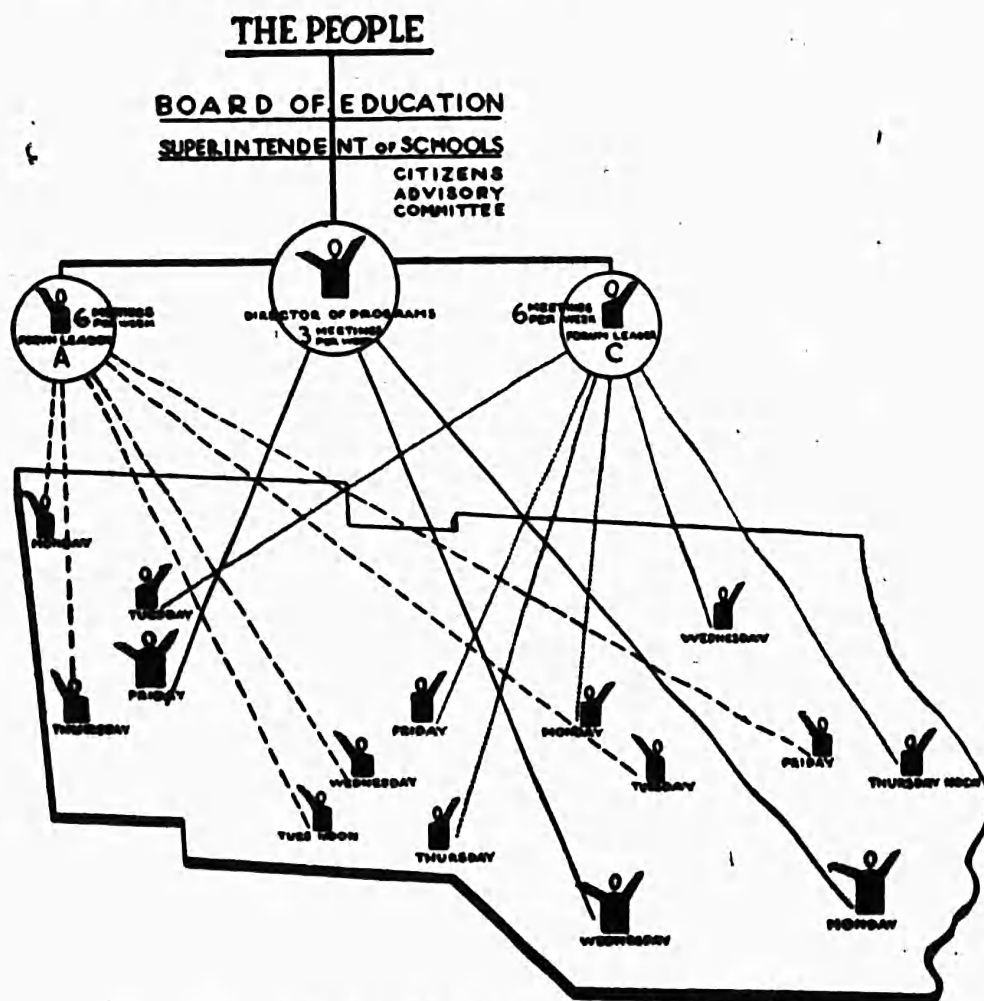


FIGURE III.—SCHEDULING CHART

### Governing Factors in Various Plans

In planning a forum district a number of factors are involved: (1) Size of population to be served; (2) size of area to be served and the peculiarities of its topography; (3) types of forums to be operated; (4) pre-

vailing desire among the residents of the district for civic educational opportunities through forums; (5) the approximate number of meetings per year desired, the quality of leadership, and the desire and need for administrative services including promotional activities.

The factors mentioned, as well as others, determine the annual cost of any forum program. The expense must justify itself in terms of probable social value. It is also well to recognize the fact that any project to be supported by the public should be, and usually is, carefully scrutinized by the taxpayers.

### Basic Requirements of Balanced Plan

The salient features of a balanced plan for forum administration in all forum districts except those with small populations and those operating under exceptional conditions are:

#### Physical features.

1. A population large enough to meet the expense of good management.
2. An area small enough to avoid unusual expenses for transportation of forum leaders.
3. Good meeting places of various sizes in all sections of the district.

#### Administration.

1. A director, part-time or full-time, depending upon the factors previously mentioned.
2. Secretarial help, amount depending upon the same factors.

#### Period of Operation.

About 30 to 35 weeks per year.<sup>1</sup>

#### Speakers and leaders for the following types of forums.

1. City or county-wide forums (more accurately, "forum district-wide").
2. Sectional forums, (organized in a circuit so that a forum leader serving for a week or two may reach all districts).
3. Neighborhood forums.

<sup>1</sup> The plans and budgets are based on the usual school year, but it is realized that at first many communities will find it necessary to operate for shorter periods and will therefore adjust the plans and budgets accordingly.



### Inexpensive additions.

1. Small study-discussion groups usually led by volunteers, meeting in homes, schools, or other convenient places.
2. Institutes planned for vacation periods, organized and participated in by the staff.
3. Leadership training courses, conducted by forum leaders to develop abilities in planning and leading group discussions and meetings of various kinds.
4. General counseling services on techniques provided by the forum director and the leaders for forums, discussion groups, and public meetings under various, non-public auspices.

## Various Plans for Forum Organization

### Plan A

**Population.**—A forum district with a population of approximately 175,000.

It involves a large enough population to justify the full application of all the basic requirements of a balanced plan.

The services provided for in the suggested budget are definitely planned to fit the several provisions of the basic requirements.

The provisions of the plan are applicable to school districts or forum districts composed of several school districts, with populations ranging roughly from 100,000 to 250,000. (In considering this statement, keep the variable factors in mind.)

It is a balanced plan which will serve as a basic scheme to be adapted to the use of forum districts with populations of less than 100,000.

It can be used also as a sound basis for larger plans to meet the needs of forum districts comprising populations ranging from about 250,000 to several million.

Generally speaking, forum districts with populations of approximately 250,000 would increase the items in the suggested plan about as follows:

1. Administration .....Proportionately.
2. City-wide and sectional forums.....Proportionately.
3. Neighborhood forums.....One leader for each 100,000 increase in population.
4. Contingent expenses.....At least proportionately.

### Suggested Budget

#### Administration.

One full-time director.....	\$ 3,500
Secretarial assistance .....	1,700

*Forum leadership.*

City or county-wide forums: 12 speakers for 10 meetings including 2 debates average fee \$150.....	1,800
*Sectional forums: Speakers or leaders for short periods of a week or more, 10 weeks at \$200 per week.....	2,000
Neighborhood forums: 2 full-time leaders at \$5,000 for 9 months, 34 weeks of forums.....	10,000

*Contingent expenses.*

Printing programs, mailing costs, materials, etc.....	1,000
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Total .....	\$20,000
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*Total number of meetings per year.*

City or county-wide forums.....	10
Sectional forums (10 weeks, 5 each week).....	50
Neighborhood forums (34 weeks for each of 2 leaders, each leading 5 meetings each week).....	340
Total .....	400

**Adaptations**

1. Employ a forum leader as director paying him \$5,000 per year. He might also lead two or three forums each week. Employ only 1 full-time neighborhood forum leader, reducing the budget to \$16,500 and the number of neighborhood forums to 250 or 272.

2. If a forum leader is employed as director at a salary of \$5,000 and there is no reduction in the number of neighborhood forum leaders provided in the plan, the budget would be increased by \$1,500, making it total \$21,500. This revision would increase the number of neighborhood meetings by 68 or 102, depending on whether the director leads two or three forums per week.

3. The community-wide forums might be eliminated, \$1,500 added to the director's salary, using the director as a part-time neighborhood forum leader, thus increasing the number of neighborhood forums and decreasing the budget by \$300.

4. Eliminate sectional meetings, reduce the community-wide meetings to seven, combine the \$2,000 saved on sectional forums with the \$450 saved on community-wide meetings, thus adding \$2,450 to item for neighborhood forums, or enough to employ an additional neighborhood leader for one-half year, thus increasing the number of neighborhood meetings to 510. Then the total number of forums would be 517.

**Plan B**

*Population.*—For a forum district with a population of approximately 50,000.

Plan B should be chosen when the population justifies a rather full treatment of the forum program but does not justify the choice of Plan A.

\* See Step No. 5.



## Suggested Budget

*Administration.*

One forum leader-director (about one-half time in administration)	\$5,000
Secretarial assistance (one-half time).....	800

*Forum leadership.*

Community-wide forums: 6 speakers, at \$150.....	900
Sectional forums: Speakers or leaders for short periods of a week or more, 5 weeks at \$200 per week.....	1,000
Neighborhood forums: 34 weeks of forums, 3 meetings per week led by the forum leader-director.....	-----

*Contingent expenses.*

Printing, mailing costs, supplies, etc.....	800
---	-----

Total ..... \$8,500

*Total number of forums per year.*

Community-wide .....	6
Sectional .....	25
Neighborhood .....	102
Total .....	133

## Adaptations

The following revision of this plan may be suggested: Assign responsibility for directing the forums to the superintendent, an assistant superintendent, a director of adult education, or some other member of the regular administrative staff, thus making possible a full-time neighborhood leader at \$5,000 and a total number of neighborhood meetings increased from 102 to 170. Plan C might be used.

## Plan C

*Population.*—For a forum district with a population of approximately 25,000.

## Suggested Budget

*Administration.*

Direction of forums.....	\$ -----
Responsibility assumed by superintendent or regular staff member.	
Secretarial assistance (one-fourth time).....	350

*Forum leadership.*

Community-wide forums: 6 speakers, at \$150.....	900
Sectional forums: 3 weeks, at \$200.....	600
Neighborhood forums: 1 leader employed for 17 weeks (rate \$5,000 per school year of 34 weeks)*.....	2,500

\* This leader might be employed for another period of 17 weeks in one or more neighboring communities.

*Contingent expenses.*

Printing, mailing costs, supplies, etc.....	400
Total .....	\$4,750

*Total number of forums per year.*

Community-wide .....	6
Sectional .....	15
Neighborhood .....	85
Total .....	106

**Adaptations**

The following are possible revisions of this plan:

1. Eliminate community-wide and sectional forums, add the \$1,500 saved in this way to the item for neighborhood forums, thus making possible 27 weeks of neighborhood forums or 135 meetings in the year instead of 106.
2. Eliminate the sectional forums, increase the community-wide forums to eight, thus saving \$300 and reducing the total budget to \$4,450.
3. Eliminate the sectional forums and reduce the community-wide forums to three, thus saving \$1,050 and reducing the total budget to \$3,700.
4. If economy is necessary, Plan C, through cooperation with administrators of schools in other districts of the State or nearby States interested in establishing forums, and with speakers' bureaus, may achieve the following results:
  - (a) Reduction of travel, saving time for leaders. Same quality of leadership anticipated in the budget might be secured at reduced cost.
  - (b) Part-time use of neighborhood leaders by associating communities. Use of forum leader in two nearby places on alternate weeks. If districts are not too far apart, a leader may reside in one of them, drive back and forth in the middle of the week. He may lead six forums each week, three in each place, one or two of the six being luncheon forums.

**Examples**

The Des Moines, Iowa forum program which has been operating for 6 years was organized along the lines described in Plan A. The city school system has conducted all three types of forum schedules: (1) City-wide, large meetings, (2) sectional forums, and (3) neighborhood forums. Other examples of the plans outlined here are the demonstrations conducted in Seattle, Wash., Portland, Oreg., Orange County, Calif., Ogden, Utah, Minneapolis, Minn., Milwaukee, Wis., Atlanta, Ga., Manchester, N. H., Dayton, Ohio, Pulaski County, Ark., Fairfield County, Conn.,



Sedgwick County, Kans., Schenectady County, N. Y., Delaware County, Pa., Hamilton County, Tenn. In North Carolina, Texas, West Virginia, and Colorado, Demonstration projects involved 2 or more counties.<sup>2</sup>

### Questions for Discussion and Study

1. What steps should be taken in planning forums in metropolitan communities? Who should take the initiative?
2. Why have the demonstrations so far put major emphasis on the employment of the full-time leader and considered the scheduling of speakers a secondary method of promoting forums?
3. How elaborate should our program be the first year? What is a reasonable budget in the light of our present situation?
4. How may the time and effort of a paid forum leader or leader-director be implemented by volunteers.
5. What methods of scheduling forum leaders have been used in large cities?
6. Which of the suggested budgets may be adapted to cooperative forum programs as well as to metropolitan centers?
7. What community organizations should be represented on the citizens' advisory committee? How should neighborhood committees be developed?
8. Where can we secure more information about techniques and promotional problems?

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<sup>2</sup> See Office of Education Bulletin 1937, Misc. No. 1. *Choosing Our Way*, pp. 9-15.

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## Chapter V: State and Federal Aid for Forums

**I**T IS not the purpose of this chapter to indicate what form State and Federal aid should take, but rather to outline the existing and proposed provisions for allocating State and Federal aid to adult civic education.

### State Provisions

#### Restrictive regulations and laws.

The development of adult civic education under the management of agencies of public education is prevented in some States by restrictive regulations and laws. In such States, local school districts find it difficult, or impossible, to plan programs of their own involving the expenditure even of local funds. Should Federal aid be extended for adult education on a matching basis certain States would not be able to participate while the restrictions are in force. Among such regulations the following are the most important:

1. Educational funds may not be expended for training persons over school age or for educational programs for persons over a specified age, such as 18.
2. Only school districts of a certain class may spend public funds for adult education.
3. Public funds for adult education may be spent only for the reduction of illiteracy or for Americanization classes.
4. Educational personnel must fulfill certain standard requirements or have certain qualifications, which are impractical to require of forum leaders or speakers. Thus, the regulation prevents the use of school funds for the conduct of forums.
5. Educational personnel cannot be employed with public funds unless it carries a prescribed "teaching load."

Such regulations, variously stated, make it difficult to allocate local funds for forum leaders.

#### Permissive regulations and laws.

In a number of States specific provisions are made in the school code or laws permitting the use of local school funds for adult education.



These provisions make it possible for local communities to use school funds for adult education as the school board may decide.

### Grants in aid.

A number of States provide for financial assistance to local communities for programs of adult education. These provisions for State aid are of the following types:

1. Grants of specific sums to local school districts, distributed on the basis of population or school budgets.
2. Grants to the State department for studies or promotion of various phases of adult education.
3. Grants to local communities at some specified rate per enrollee in adult classes or groups based on average attendance. The local school districts conducting classes or forums for adults in accordance with such regulations do not usually have advance budgets with which to work. Local school funds are used for the first year of the programs. The State-aid plan reimburses the local school budget at the end of the first year on the basis of the average attendance. In a few States, notably California, the State aid is sufficiently high to meet the cost of forum leadership at the rate of \$15 to \$50 per meeting, provided, of course, that the attendance rate consistently attains the required average.
4. Some States provide for the matching of local funds by State funds.
5. State aid for adult education classes may be supplemented as in Massachusetts by the collection of fees from the enrolled persons.

Forum planning committees should investigate carefully the specific State regulations and provisions for grants in aid applying to the community, or communities, involved.

### Trends

The State Forum Conferences called by the State departments in 36 States from which reports were secured by the Office of Education revealed that in most States where provisions for grants in aid are made, local public education has not generally taken advantage of favorable provisions for the development of forums. It is also true that permissive regulations are not used as a basis for inaugurating programs of adult civic education generally. One of the results of these State conferences was the appointment of State Forum Committees to work with the State departments in the planning of forum programs within the provisions of the State law and to encourage local agencies of public education to take advantage of the State assistance available.

In a number of States new legislation is under consideration involving (a) the lifting of present restrictions, (b) the extension of permission to the local school districts to pursue plans for various kinds of adult education at local expense, and (c) to establish or increase State aid for adult education generally and for adult civic education through forums specifically.

## The Contribution of Federal Funds

As stated in the beginning of this publication Federal emergency funds have been used during the past 3 years for 3 main purposes relating to forums:

1. To finance or assist local communities in financing forum demonstrations for specific periods of time.
2. To assist local communities in the development of forum programs led by volunteers or persons paid by local funds by making available WPA workers to function as clerks, researchists, librarians, etc.
3. To enable the Office of Education to act as a clearing house in facilitating the exchange of data and information concerning forums. This has been done largely through publications, and correspondence, but also to some extent through field counselors.

It should be clearly understood that there is as yet no permanent provision for Federal aid to local public education for adult civic education. There are, however, several proposals before Congress for extending Federal aid to the States and local communities for this purpose.<sup>1</sup>

Whether the forum demonstration program is continued or expanded on the present basis involving the use of emergency appropriations largely for the employment of needy professional and skilled white-collar workers will depend upon the future provisions made by Congress. In any case, forum planning committees should not create plans which *depend* upon Federal aid for their realization until specific provisions have been made for Federal grants for such programs. Local planning at this time should depend upon local or State resources now available.

## Questions for Discussion and Study

1. What restrictive or permissive laws affect the planning of forums in our State?
2. What are the major proposals for changing the State law or providing for State aid to adult education in our State?
3. What has the Office of Education to offer in the way of future assistance? What proposals are being made for Federal aid to adult education in the States?
4. What provisions in other State laws have given material assistance to the development of forums?

<sup>1</sup> Those interested in studying the provisions of these proposals may secure a mimeographed digest of pending educational legislation by writing to the Office of Education.



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## Chapter VI: Counting the Costs

THE EXCITING and interesting part of any educational enterprise is the actual achievement of results. But we know that behind most educational achievements are tedious hours of detailed planning and usually struggles with budgets. This chapter is devoted to an analysis of the factors to be taken into consideration in planning forum budgets.

We may start with the general proposition that: You have to pay for what you get; and you have to plan if you expect to get the most for what you pay.

While it is possible to translate volunteer efforts into educational results, as we have suggested in Chapter II, it is nevertheless true that good education calls for an investment of money as well. Most volunteer speakers would not be able to volunteer their time and their energies were it not for the fact that they are getting paid for professional work in universities or elsewhere. It is unsound in the long run to assume that the difficult job of guiding profitable adult forum discussion should be an unpaid or charitable activity. It is perhaps more reasonable to expect the college professor to teach his regular classes on a volunteer basis and to get paid for the more difficult job of leading adult forums.

However, the assumption in this chapter is that some money is to be invested in forum leadership. The question then arises: How can the school system get the most per dollar of investment?

### Methods of Payment Contrasted

Often, at present, forums are supported, in part at least, by the fee system. Honorariums ranging from 5 to 10 dollars to several hundred are paid to speakers for delivering addresses on topics of public interest. Those receiving from 50 dollars upward usually handle their bookings through speakers' bureaus. The fees cover the cost of extensive transportation of the speaker (usually on a national or regional tour), publicity, promotion and arrangements, and a percentage to the agent. Speakers whose contracts are handled by reputable lecture bureaus have "box office" appeal—that is, they are prominent people successful in certain fields whose names attract audiences. In addition to delivering prepared addresses such speakers frequently welcome a brief question period which distinguishes their performances from straight lectures.

Speakers represented by the lecture bureaus may be introduced into a community-wide forum program with great profit at the point suggested by Step No. 6 in Chapter II. Some of these speakers will be willing to undertake a series of five meetings, the total fee for which will be less than the accumulated fee for individual meetings. (See Step No. 5 in Chapter II.)

Some forums depend almost exclusively on speakers who live in the general area and are willing to come for fees of less than fifty dollars—sometimes for only their expenses. In a study of 232 forums, which indicated on a questionnaire the average fee paid to speakers, the general average was found to be seventy dollars per address.

In contrasting the fee system with the salary plan, we are attempting to clarify the problem which faces any forum management of getting the maximum educational results from its investment. However, it should be noted that the apparent desirability of investing funds for leadership on a salary basis for the basic program does not argue against the employment of speakers for single engagements or for only 1 or 2 weeks. The fact that our universities employ full-time professors does not mean that speakers not associated with the university are not useful to the educational program. Indeed, many lecture bureaus do their most consistent booking with universities and with religious institutions operated in the main by full-time paid leadership. It is logical to assume that the popularization of public discussion through well-led forums which reach the neighborhood folk will produce a new audience for speakers who serve on the fee basis.

Whether compensation is in terms of fees or full-time salaries depends on what the forum management is trying to buy with its budget. It may be both possible and desirable to distribute the budget in such a way as to secure both salaried leaders and speakers on the honorarium basis. The following columns summarize briefly the contrast between employing leadership on a fee basis and on a salary basis.

#### *Fee Method of Payment*

1. Usually lectures or addresses are delivered. Questions are answered.
2. Speakers are usually well-known personalities, famous orators, or leaders in particular fields.

#### *Salary Method of Payment*

1. Presentation of subject and skilled guidance of discussion desired.
2. Forum leaders may be well-known personalities, probably leaders in their chosen fields; not often famous orators, rather, persons capable of guiding the exploration of controversial issues.



3. The Community is given about 2 hours of the speaker's time at a single meeting.
4. Variety—each meeting usually presents a different speaker.
5. Each meeting must be promoted separately unless season tickets are sold.
6. Speaker ordinarily does not know the people in his audience nor is he familiar with the local needs and interests.
7. Cost per meeting: From \$50 to \$500 or more, usually between \$100 and \$200 per lecture. Local speakers from \$5 to \$50 per meeting and upward.
3. Leadership is provided for 5 or 6 meetings per week *plus* additional contributions to the adult education program; 8 hours per day.
4. Continuity—the same leader conducts a series of from 10 to 34 meetings.
5. Audiences built up by the leader during the series.
6. The forum leader becomes acquainted with the members of his various forums and studies local interests and conditions in order to relate discussion to them.
7. Cost per meeting \$15 to \$40. (Not including "off-schedule," occasional meetings.)

The important difference between a program which presents a large number of speakers and one which relies upon the full-time leadership of one or more leaders of group discussion is an educational one. In the former case, the management is engaged in stimulating public interest and presenting informative speeches about public affairs. In the latter case, these two objectives are served, perhaps less dramatically, but in addition the people themselves experience a process of free discussion under skilled guidance. A good forum leader living and working in a community for a semester, or for a year or more, should make an impact on the community, in the schools, and in the community organizations, as well as in the forums. It is his job to develop the skill on the part of the members of his audiences in the organized and logical discussion of public affairs, critical analysis, and a good-natured exchange of opinion.

This type of leadership is not likely to emerge from a forum movement which is based entirely on the fee system. Forum leadership must be professionalized to a certain extent. The most effective way to professionalize the work of leading and directing community forums is to provide reasonably good salaries and attractive opportunities for full-time employment. Few persons wish to join a "tramp profession" requiring that they live in pullman trains. As a matter of fact, a great many speakers on the lecture platform go on tour for only short periods, having full-time professions of their own.

## Contrast in Costs

It is frequently assumed that an annual salary for approximately 34 weeks' full-time work amounting to about \$5,000 is high and beyond the range of public agencies of education. Such a salary is considered in contrast to the annual salaries paid to teachers, principals, supervisors, and superintendents. However, in many cases, the educational authorities who regard this annual salary for a forum leader as unusually high, conduct forum meetings at which fees are paid for single addresses ranging from \$25 to \$150, or more. Before the annual salary plan is discarded, local committees studying the problem of developing community-wide forum programs should engage in a little cost accounting.

For example: For approximately \$5,000 a community or a group of communities can secure a competent forum leader to conduct between 170 and 204 forums at the rate of five or six meetings per week. This is at the rate of from approximately \$25 to \$30 per meeting. In addition to conducting these forums, the leader is available to make such further contributions as:

1. To assist in planning and scheduling.
2. To help on follow-up work.
3. To counsel the libraries in their work of stimulating reading and serving readers at forums.
4. To give directions for the preparation of visual aids, maps, charts, etc.
5. To counsel with teachers and professors in the development of forums for young people.
6. To assist local volunteer leaders in planning small group discussions and study circles.
7. To meet with neighborhood or community forum committees.

The person capable of commanding this salary would probably require a fee of \$100, or more, for each meeting if he should distribute his efforts across the country on an expansive schedule. The communities contracting for his leadership for a single speech would not only be paying \$70 more per forum but they would be getting less of his time and fewer of his abilities. The \$5,000 spent at the rate of \$100 per speech would bring to the community 50 speeches rather than between 170 and 204 meetings where presentation and skilled guidance of discussion are combined.

If the individual community is not ready to support that many meetings per year, the benefits of the full-time employment of a forum leader can be obtained through the sharing of the time of a forum leader by several communities, as outlined in Chapter III.



The budget-makers may find the following form helpful in calculating the cost in relation to the values to be gained from given plans for forum programs.

<i>We pay</i>	<i>We get</i>
1. Salary per month, per semester, or per academic year .....\$ .....	1. { Number of forums.... .. Additional services.... ..
2. Fees for speakers..... ..	2. Number of meetings.... ..
3. Light, heat, janitor service ..... ..	3. Number of meetings.... ..
4. Direction or management (part-time or full-time) ..... ..	4. { Number of meetings to be scheduled..... .. Other services..... ..
5. Clerical services..... ..	5. Contributions made to program ..... ..
6. Contingent fund <sup>1</sup> ..... ..	6. { Transportation for leaders ..... .. Publicity ..... .. General promotion.... ..
Total budget..... ..	Total program..... ..

## Questions for Discussion and Study

1. Can worth-while civic education be secured without the expenditure of money? What difficulties face the administration of a forum program, when there is no budget?
2. With a given amount of money for forums, what questions should be explored in arriving at a plan for spending it most effectively?
3. Why are full-time forum leaders employed on an annual salary basis less expensive to the community than speakers secured on a fee basis?
4. What values are obtained from the lecture-question forum featuring an outstanding speaker which are not found in the same degree in the discussion meeting guided by a forum leader?
5. Which types of forums can our community afford to organize and support with attendance?
6. What is a reasonable per meeting cost for leadership? Can the forum leader be expected to serve the community program in other ways than the leading of 5 or 6 regular forums per week? How?

<sup>1</sup> Planning committees should take into consideration the need of libraries for supplemental funds with which to secure books and pamphlets in the field of public affairs with which to serve the reading interests of forum audiences. In many communities the funds for libraries are insufficient and the lack of books in the general field of the discussions prevents the forums from achieving the best educational results. When school systems manage forums, special funds can be earmarked for books and pamphlets which when purchased contribute greatly to the service of the school libraries to both enrolled students and adults in forums.

## Chapter VII: The Questions Before Us

**W**HILE THIS handbook has dealt mainly with practical ways of organization, we propose in this chapter to recognize some of the perplexing problems with which managements will be faced. The brief answers set forth here are not intended to be sufficient or complete. There are other publications easily accessible which handle these questions in detail.

Here we shall propose a list of questions dealing with (1) leadership, (2) forum techniques, (3) promotion, and (4) policy problems which should form the basis for study and discussion on the part of public-school administrations and citizens forum committees.

### Leadership

#### Question No. 1. What are the essential qualifications for a forum leader?

- Answer: (1) Broad scholarship in the fields of history, sociology, economics and political science and related fields of subject matter.
- (2) Ability to speak effectively and interestingly the language understood by people of average schooling.
- (3) Attractive personality capable of winning people to an interest in a subject and encouraging them to participate in the exploration of it. (This is quite different from the kind of personality which "wins people to agree with the speaker." Rather it is the rare personal quality which assures people that the leader respects them and their ideas, is modest about his own convictions, and seeks the frank and full expression of different points of view.)
- (4) Skill in leading discussion. (The forum leader is a good teacher who knows how to help people with adult interests to explore their problems and seek understandings through group thinking and free discussion.)

The third and fourth qualifications are the crucial ones. Many people are broadly and highly educated, clever, and able in expressing themselves on the platform, but are arrogant, egotistical, depreciatory of the views of other people, impatient with the gropings of less disciplined minds, and concerned primarily with winning converts to their own beliefs.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> For detailed discussion see *Choosing Our Way*, pages 42-44 and page 114 for suggested "Inquiry Blank Concerning Forum Leader."



**Question No. 2. Where may forum leaders be found?**

**Answer:** Unfortunately, there is as yet no placement organization similar to the Teacher-Placement Bureaus or the Lecture Bureaus where the records on available forum leaders are kept and where forum managements may apply for applicants. One or two teacher-placement agencies have begun to consider the possibilities of rendering this service. More will undertake it when the demand for leadership of this type is more general. At the present time, a forum management may find forum leaders in the following places:

- (1) In the universities and colleges having recognized departments of economics, sociology, political science, and related subjects. Beware of the dry academicians who disdain to talk in the vernacular. Technical terms do not always assure scholarship, and dullness is not a guarantee of profundity.
- (2) Lecture bureaus.—Many lecture bureaus are booking speakers who are capable of excellent service as *forum leaders* or those agencies know where to find such persons.
- (3) Leading newspaper and publishing houses. Many writers are also excellent forum leaders.
- (4) In research organizations and special interest associations concerned with economic, international and social problems. Again, beware of the extreme academician.
- (5) In the law profession.
- (6) Adult Education Councils.

**Question No. 3. What provisions are made or should be made for training forum leaders?**

**Answer:** Some universities have introduced courses in the regular or summer curriculum dealing with forum discussion techniques and methods. More will do so when the demand for such courses increases by virtue of the professionalization of the work. All schools and particularly the universities and graduate schools are to a certain extent training forum leaders all the time. The methods of leading discussion are quickly learned through study and experimentation, but it takes years of organized study to become the kind of educated and articulate person who is capable of using these methods effectively in the adult forum. Students in colleges are not so critical of the professor or instructor fresh from the triumph of a Ph.D. as are adults who come to forums from the stern environment of the work-a-day world. Book learning is not enough to satisfy audiences at forums. This being the case, forum leaders cannot be trained directly for such leadership except in the use of discussion methods. When the educational system puts the proper emphasis on

learning through well-guided discussion, the methods of guiding group exploration will be acquired by students while they pursue their subject-matter studies. We shall also have more and better forum leaders when students in our higher schools are given even more encouragement than at present to believe in the capacity of the people to govern themselves and discouraged from adopting an attitude of intellectual superiority and exhibitionism. More college trained people should qualify as good forum leaders.

**Question No. 4. Can one forum leader or a group of leaders successfully lead forums in the same community or area for an entire academic year?**

**Answer:** Really good forum leaders should be able to increase in effectiveness in guiding fruitful discussion as they become acquainted with their audiences and with the community. Students give attention to really good teachers and professors several times per week for 2 or 3 years. Sometimes this is due to certain compulsions, but frequently because the students respond to the expert leadership they are getting. Persons who have limited fields of specialization, or a few prepared lectures, or who lack the imagination required to bring out the infinite variety of resources in the audiences may not be able to interest forum audiences for more than a few weeks. The answer to the question is: "Yes—if the forum leader is exceptional."

**Question No. 5. Where can good speakers or lecturers be secured?**

- Answer:**
- (1) Lecture bureaus. Such bureaus are located in all parts of the country, but most of them have headquarters in New York and Chicago.<sup>2</sup>
  - (2) Organizations devoted to the spread of information and enlightenment on public affairs. Some of these are engaged in scheduling speakers to express a particular point of view. Such speakers can be used by forums if the management will take care to balance points of view in selecting speakers. Some require fees while others may be secured without charge or merely for expenses, their salaries being taken care of by their organization.
  - (3) Educational lecture bureaus. A number of lecture bureaus are maintained by educational institutions or non-profit educational organizations. Fees for speakers listed by such bureaus are usually small and sometimes the bureaus even provide speakers free of charge or for expenses.

<sup>2</sup> A list of bureaus may be had by writing to the Office of Education.



- (4) Organize your own speakers' bureau. Many local adult education councils or school systems are providing themselves with indexes to good speakers. Every community has some qualified speakers who will participate in forums on some basis.
- (5) Universities and secondary schools.
- (6) In the professions—business, labor, agriculture, journalism.
- (7) Government agencies in States and localities.
- (8) Councils of Social Agencies.

**Question No. 6. Is it good practice to divide the forum leadership job by having both a speaker for presentation and a leader for guiding discussion?**

**Answer:** Yes, if it can be afforded and the team works well together. It is costly to pay both speaker and leader and difficult to get one or the other for nothing. The leader of the discussion cannot be skilled merely in method. He must know something about the subject and must be generally well educated. If he is a prepared leader of the discussion he should be able to present the subject. The advantage of having a speaker and a discussion leader is mainly that specialized presentation and variety are secured in the schedules without requiring that each speaker be skilled in discussion techniques.

**Question No. 7. Can local people be trained to lead their own discussions, to serve as volunteers, and to depend upon themselves and available literature for the resources of good discussion?**

**Answer:** Yes, to a certain extent. Small group discussions and study circles should multiply in communities where adult civic education is vigorously promoted, particularly where good forum leaders have initiated large numbers of the people in the forum method. These discussions can be led by members of the group. This method of adult education is not a substitute for a program based on skilled leadership any more than it would be a substitute for good teaching in the higher schools. It is a way of supplementing a basic program involving competent leaders, and constitutes a good beginning when paid leadership cannot be secured.

## Techniques and Methods

### Question No. 1. What are the main methods for conducting discussion forum meetings?

- Answer: (1) Informal group discussion—For groups of 10 to 25 led by one of the group.
- (2) Committee or conference discussion—For small groups of persons who must reach a decision on a matter of mutual concern.
- (3) Panel discussion—For large or small groups; the subject is presented and discussed by qualified students usually having different opinions; participation of audience follows panel discussion.
- (4) Lecture forum—For audiences of different sizes based on the presentation of a qualified speaker who may or may not guide discussion; sometimes only questions are permitted or encouraged. Panels may be used to supplement the speaker.
- (5) Symposium—For audiences of different sizes based on the expert presentation of different phases of the subject by three or more persons.
- (6) Debate—For audiences of different sizes based upon presentation by two speakers of opposite points of view. There are many ways of organizing the time and making use of the skills of the speakers.<sup>3</sup>

### Question No. 2. Which method is the best?

Answer: The one that is practical in a given situation and which best fits the subject and the audience. The given situation refers to the available leadership and meeting place. Usually the management does not have unlimited choice in available leadership and, therefore, cannot always employ the most desirable method, or the meeting place does not lend itself to a particular method for conducting the meeting. Some subjects are best explored by one method, while others are presented and discussed better by another. A "three-sided" subject ought, if possible, to be presented by three speakers rather than as a debate with two, etc. The size and background of the audience are factors in deciding which is the best method.

<sup>3</sup> For excellent analysis and exposition of methods see *Discussion Methods* by Garland and Phillips and other publications listed in the bibliography.



**Question No. 3. How much time should be provided for discussion in forums led by competent forum leaders?**

**Answer:** As much as possible. Some subjects require more presentation than others before an audience is ready to discuss intelligently. Some groups require more information and exposition on the same subject than others. Generally speaking, about half of the period of not more than 2 hours should be devoted to discussion. This discussion period should not consist of two or three encores (short speeches) by the leader. Too many forum leaders monopolize the discussion period.

**Question No. 4. Should visual aids, charts, graphs, blackboards and maps be used?**

**Answer:** By all means. Also, motion pictures if they are good, solid material for follow-up discussion. Anything that short cuts or makes more vivid the presentation of the problems under discussion ought to be used. Those things should not be used indiscriminately. Beware of cluttering up the forum with knick-knacks. Everything must be devoted to the successful exploration of the subject. The purpose of the forum is not to amuse or divert but to educate. The process may be and ought to be enjoyable, fascinating, and entertaining in the sense of being exciting and interesting.

**Promotion<sup>4</sup>****Question No. 1. What are the best means of promoting attendance and interest in the forum?**

- Answer:**
- (1) Good leadership that makes people want to come again.
  - (2) Interesting and vital topics for discussion, usually highly controversial and current.
  - (3) Effective forum committees willing to employ actively various methods to gain public interest and support.
  - (4) Good press notices before and after forums. The best kind of newspaper publicity is obtained by the announcement of important issues for discussion and the scheduling of competent leaders.
  - (5) Printed announcements of the meetings, preferably for a series being held regularly at the same place.
  - (6) Notices sent to the homes near the meeting place via the school children.

<sup>4</sup> See Chapter V. in *Choosing Our Way*.

- (7) Radio announcements and regular radio discussions on topics of general interest.
- (8) Make the forum a school concern so that the loyalty of the teachers and students is geared to the success of the enterprise.
- (9) Posters, billboards, etc.

### Question No. 2. What kind of subjects are most appealing and how should they be stated?

Answer: Subjects which are controversial, current, and which may be directly related to the life and interests of the people are best, whether local or international. Topics which are controversial should be stated in question form. And no unfair assumptions should be made in the statement of the question. It is excellent procedure to break down a big subject into several topics and present these in a series of related forums.

### Question No. 3. What kind of assistance can school managements secure to help with promotion?

- Answer:
- (1) Local reporters on newspapers who themselves enjoy the forums and believe in them.
  - (2) Students and teachers in high schools and colleges who find the promotion of the forums a specific social service in behalf of making democracy work. Students can prepare posters in art classes, print programs in print shops, serve on committees, serve on panels, distribute notices, usher at meetings, prepare visual aids and maps, conduct studies and surveys, etc.
  - (3) Leaders of local civic and educational groups.
  - (4) Business and industrial concerns. Frequently notices are sent to employees in pay envelopes or otherwise and employers encourage forum attendance.
  - (5) Labor unions and farm organizations. Union and farm leaders are helpful in promoting the forums among their groups.

In general, the promotion of the forum need rely less and less on the usual promotional devices of publicity and exhortation as the meetings become a recognized institution with a popular base. The forum should be the common ground for all factions and all groups and not the special mouthpiece for any. Above all the forums must be responsive to the people's needs and represent their work and effort as well as the guidance of paid experts. The forums are not classes offered to those interested



by educators who know what is good for people; they are rather instruments for popular education managed by the people's own public institution for education in the development of which the learners have a large share of responsibility and opportunity for participation. This sense on the part of the people of participation in the planning of their own education is the surest base for effective promotion.

## Policy and Problems

**Question No. 1. Should the public schools schedule forums on hotly contested subjects when it seems likely that the school authorities may be accused of taking sides or of unfairness?**

**Answer:** In general, if the community is not yet convinced of the ability of the management of the forum to arrange free and fair discussion, or the propriety of discussing certain subjects, it is better to present issues which are controversial but acceptable to the vast majority of the people until confidence is nurtured by demonstration. The guidance of a local citizens' committee representing the various community groupings will help the management to decide this question. The time should come, however, when any subject which is important and in good taste may be and indeed should be discussed at forums. The fact that some small minority has a selfish interest in suppressing the discussion and study of certain topics should not deter an educational institution from organizing discussions on such topics. Its responsibility is to the people as a whole and to the democracy which gives it life, and not to any special interest group. The people will support their schools in this if they are thoroughly convinced that the management has no partisan or one-sided commitment.

**Question No. 2. Can forum leaders be expected to be impartial and is this desirable?**

**Answer:** They should be expected to be impartial if they are being presented to the community as impartial guides of discussion. If they are frankly presented to make a case for their own convictions, impartiality should be attained by the management by matching able representatives of conflicting views either in debates or in series of meetings.<sup>5</sup>

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<sup>5</sup> See Chapter I, *Forums for Young People*.

**Question No. 3. What may be done to safeguard the forum against charges of partisanship or unfairness?**

- Answer:** (1) Every effort should be made to use all available techniques for making all forums fair to all sides concerned. This is done mainly by the careful selection of forum leaders who are themselves fair and honest, eager to entertain various expressions of opinion. It is also accomplished by using the presentation and discussion method which fits the subject and the audience.
- (2) Where criticism is likely to come from an element not well represented at the forums in the past, special efforts should be made to get a goodly representation from that group at the meetings on subjects of special interest to it. It should be made clear that the meetings will approximate a fair picture of the controversy if those of all points of view will avail themselves of the opportunity to speak up.
- (3) When criticism is made of a particular forum meeting and its conduct, and when the criticism represents something substantial in the community and not merely a few "cranks," the director will do well to invite the critics to help stage additional meetings on the same topic at which representatives of their point of view will be adequately heard. The critics should not wish to end the discussion, if they feel it was unfairly handled; they should help make it fair on the assumption that the people have a right to hear and to discuss.
- (4) A balanced citizens' committee working with the management will be the greatest protection against serious criticism resulting in loss of public confidence.

**Question No. 4. What should be the functions of the citizens' advisory committee?**

**Answer:** The functions of this committee should be to advise and to help in the preparation for meetings. The determination of general policy will usually rest with the school board and persons to whom the board delegates responsibility. If the authorities over-ride the suggestions of the committee they must naturally have a good reason and be prepared to take the consequences of censure if the committee is really representing the feelings of the people. The public agency of education is responsible to the whole people and the administration must decide whether the advice of any advisory committee is consistent with this primary responsibility. The board of education is elected to determine policy in general. Wherever possible the considered judgments of well-balanced committees representing community groupings should be followed and it is most important that the members of such committees understand the position of the management.



**Question No. 5. Should the forum be free to the public and open to all?**

**Answer:** It is generally considered desirable that they should be free, and if they are, they should be open to all citizens in the same way that other opportunities offered by the public institutions are. Some public schools impose a small registration fee for a series of forums in order to comply with a regulation or in the belief that some small investment on the part of the members of the audience makes them appreciate the forum and attend more regularly. Unfortunately, almost any fee is bound to prevent some people from enjoying the advantages of the program. Because it is assumed that the forums educate for better citizenship the withholding of the opportunity from any group of people on an economic basis is questioned.

**Question No. 6. Why plan forums when we can listen to all sorts of discussions on the radio?**

**Answer:** Face to face discussion of important human problems will and should go forward regardless of how many "listening" opportunities we have. We learn certain things from trying to express ourselves. We discover our ignorance and seek information and knowledge when we try to satisfy other people concerning our beliefs and ideas. We come to understand people and strange ideas when we ourselves may put questions and argue points. We do not ourselves grow in understanding and articulate ability as much as we should when we merely consume prepared presentations which come out of loudspeakers. If they are to mean much to us, we must digest them, challenge them, and talk them over in groups. We can tune in great speakers and provocative discussions at home, but we will get infinitely more from listening if we are prepared to discuss what is said in groups at the time or later. The radio increases rather than diminishes the need for face to face discussion.

## **Unfinished Business**

These questions are selected from hundreds as the most pertinent ones. Other questions and much more detailed answers will be found in the publications listed in the bibliography. This short reading list is your unfinished business if you are really concerned about playing some role in this kind of practical planning to make American democracy work.

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## Appendix

### Facts About Forum Demonstrations and Projects

Assistance has been given to the local educational authorities in 580 communities in 40 States.

*Demonstrations* involving the employment of paid forum leaders with funds provided by the Office of Education were conducted in 38 States.

Since February 1936 the following record was achieved by all *demonstrations* in the 38 States where they were sponsored:

Number of meetings held, 14,454<sup>1</sup>

Total attendance, 1,700,866.

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<sup>1</sup> Many other meetings were held in projects where no paid leadership was provided from Federal funds. Some communities were given the assistance of WPA workers who were paid from the appropriations allocated to the Office of Education. It is estimated that about 5,000 meetings were held in communities given this type of assistance. Most of these meetings were led by volunteers. The total attendance is estimated at 85,000.



*Forum demonstrations conducted with assistance from the Office of Education*

State	Key centers	Periods of Operation	Local Person in Charge <sup>1</sup>	Number of Meetings	Attendance Reported
Alabama.....	Birmingham	December 1937 to July 1938	J. E. Bryan	300	41,496
Arizona.....	Phoenix	December 1937 to July 1938	E. W. Montgomery	86	15,844
Arkansas.....	Little Rock	September 1936 to July 1937	R. C. Hall	316	23,164
California.....	Santa Ana	September 1936 to July 1937 August 1938 to March 1939	F. A. Henderson	668 151	106,839 16,695
Colorado.....	Colorado Springs	February 1936 to June 1937	Hobart M. Corning	762	53,643
Connecticut.....	Stamford	February 1937 to July 1937	Leon C. Staples	193	8,613
Georgia.....	Atlanta	February 1937 to July 1937 August 1938 to March 1939	Willis A. Sutton M. D. Collins	491 334	38,299 49,002
Idaho.....	Pocatello	April 1938 to July 1938	E. Norman Vaughn	65	10,320
Illinois.....	Herrin	January 1938 to June 1938	J. R. Creek	68	4,599
Indiana.....	Anderson	January 1938 to June 1938	Arthur Campbell	116	11,630
Kansas.....	Wichita	September 1936 to April 1937	L. W. Mayberry	342	24,013
Kentucky.....	Lexington	January 1938 to June 1938	Henry H. Hill	63	6,123
Louisiana.....	Jennings	January 1938 to May 1938	L. I. Kilgore	104	22,376
Michigan.....	Kalamazoo	January 1938 to May 1938 August 1938 to March 1939	Loy Norrix	136 177	26,718 15,995
Minnesota.....	Minneapolis	September 1936 to July 1937 August 1938 to March 1939	C. R. Reed	1,017 153	107,053 19,006
Mississippi.....	Gulfport Jackson	January 1938 to June 1938 August 1938 to March 1939	B. Frank Brown	158 165	20,663 40,477
Montana.....	Butte	January 1938 to July 1938	Douglas Gold	77	6,839
New Hampshire.....	Manchester	February 1936 to July 1937	Louis P. Benezet	407	27,892
New Jersey.....	Belvidere Freehold Somerville	January 1938 to July 1938 January 1938 to July 1938 January 1938 to July 1938	Will G. Atwood Thomas B. Harper Robert G. Sanford	39 46 73	2,480 7,109 8,808
	Trenton	August 1938 to March 1939	Robert Morrison	178	54,897
New Mexico.....	Santa Fe	January 1938 to July 1938 August 1938 to March 1939	R. P. Sweeney	98 69	11,010 8,096

## FORUM PLANNING

*Forum demonstrations conducted with assistance from the Office of Education  
(Continued)*

State	Key centers	Periods of Operation	Local Person in Charge <sup>1</sup>	Number of Meetings	Attendance Reported
New York.....	Schenectady	September 1936 to July 1937 August 1938 to March 1939	W. H. Pilabury	236 131	9,235 12,282
North Carolina..	Goldboro	February 1937 to July 1937	Ray Armstrong	639	88,769
North Dakota	Fargo	August 1938 to March 1939	Frank Eversull	167	23,593
Ohio.....	Dayton	December 1936 to July 1937	Claude V. Courter	399	36,723
Oklahoma.....	Norman	January 1938 to July 1938	J. D. Garrison	69	6,685
Oregon.....	Portland	September 1936 to July 1937 August 1938 to March 1939	Chas. A. Rice	972 188	102,253 26,412
Pennsylvania	Media Tyrone	February 1937 to July 1937 January 1938 to July 1938	Carl G. Leech W. W. Eisenhart	315 95	23,590 15,942
Rhode Island...	Providence	August 1938 to March 1939	J. F. Rochert	100	9,863
South Carolina..	Columbia	January 1938 to July 1938 August 1938 to March 1939	W. H. Ward	188 179	27,921 15,544
Tennessee.....	Chattanooga	September 1936 to July 1937	Arthur L. Rankin	709	76,304
Texas.....	Waco	February 1937 to July 1937	R. H. Brister	334	34,989
Utah.....	Ogden	February 1937 to July 1937 August 1938 to March 1939	W. Karl Hopkins	236 148	43,327 45,114
Vermont.....	Montpelier	April 1938 to July 1938	Francis L. Bailey	90	7,974
Virginia.....	Lynchburg	January 1938 to July 1938	Omer Carmichael	95	5,619
Washington.....	Seattle	February 1936 to July 1937 August 1938 to March 1939	Worth McClure Worth McClure	629 156	96,457 25,781
West Virginia...	Morgantown	February 1936 to July 1937	Floyd B. Cox	850	60,696
Wisconsin.....	Milwaukee	January 1938 to July 1938 August 1938 to March 1939	Milton C. Potter	531 177	58,430 23,850
Wyoming.....	Cheyenne	January 1938 to July 1938	A. S. Jessup	69	10,374
Total.....				14,454	1,700,866

<sup>1</sup> All persons in charge of local projects are superintendents of schools, except in South Carolina.



## Communities Reached

[NOTE.—The communities in *italics* were assisted entirely by WPA workers. The other cities and towns were served by forum leaders whose salaries were paid partly or entirely by the Office of Education.]

### Alabama

Bessemer	Edgewood	Irondale	Rutledge
Birmingham	Fairfield	Leeds	Tarrant City
Brighton	Hueytown	Lipscomb	

### Arizona

Chandler	Globe	Miami	Superior
Glendale	Mesa	Phoenix	Tempe

### Arkansas

Badgett	Little Rock	Pinnacle	Valley Grove
Brady	Mabelvale	Robinson	Vann Dale
Fuller	McAlmont	Rose City	Wrightville
Jacksonville	Oak Grove	Scott	Wynne

### California

Anaheim	Garden Grove	Newport Beach	San Juan Capistrano
Brea	Huntington	Orange	<i>San Luis Obispo</i>
Buena Park	Laguna Beach	<i>Pasadena</i>	Santa Ana
Costa Mesa	La Habra	Placentia	Tustin
El Modeno	<i>Long Beach</i>	<i>San Diego</i>	
Fullerton	<i>Los Angeles</i>	<i>San Jose</i>	

### Colorado

Boulder	Fountain	Palmer Lake	Trinidad
Broadmoor	Ivywild	Pueblo	
Canon City	Manitou Springs	Rocky Ford	
Colorado Springs	Monument	Salida	

### Connecticut

Bridgeport	Darien	Greenwich	Norwalk
Coscob	East Portchester	New Canaan	Stamford

### Georgia

Acworth	Colbert	Genola	Reynolds
Albany	Columbus	Greenville	Rochelle
Alpharetta	Comer	Hartwell	Roswell
Americus	Cusseta	Homerville	Savannah
Arlington	Dahlonia	Ila	Soperton

Athens  
Atlanta  
Augusta  
Bainbridge  
Blackshear  
Blakely  
Brunswick  
Cardele  
Carrollton  
Carterville  
Clarksville  
Clayton  
Cochran

Dalton  
Danielsville  
Demorest  
Demoust  
Douglasville  
Dublin  
Eatonton  
Fairburn  
Folkstan  
Forsyth  
Fort Gaines  
Fort Valley  
Gainesville

LaFayette  
LaGrange  
Lavonia  
Louisville  
Macon  
Madison  
Mayfield  
McDonough  
Milledgeville  
Ocilla  
Pineview  
Porterdale  
Quitman

Sparta  
Thomaston  
Thomasville  
Thomson  
Toccoa  
Vienna  
Walton  
Washington  
Waycross  
Waynesboro

### Idaho

Blackfoot

Idaho Falls

Malad City

Pocatello

### Illinois

Anna  
Benton  
Carterville

Chicago  
DuQuoin  
Harrisburg

Herrin  
Johnston City  
Pinckneyville

Rock Island  
West Frankfort

### Indiana

Alexandria  
Anderson  
East Chicago  
Elwood  
Evansville

Fort Wayne  
Frankfort  
Gary  
Holton  
Indianapolis  
LaFayette

Logansport  
Michigan City  
Middletown  
Noblesville  
North Manchester  
Pendleton

South Bend  
West LaFayette  
Whiting

### Iowa

*Des Moines*

### Kansas

Cheney  
Clearwater

Mt. Hope  
Mulvane

Sedgwick  
Wichita

### Kentucky

Georgetown

Lexington

Paris

Winchester

### Louisiana

Crowley  
Jennings

LaFayette  
Lake Charles

Opelousas

### Massachusetts

Holyoke

*Revere*



**Michigan**

Albion  
Allegan  
Augusta  
Battle Creek

Dowagiac  
East Rapids  
Hastings  
Kalamazoo

Kellogg  
Lakeview  
Marshall  
Plainwell

Richland  
Vicksburg

**Minnesota**

Minneapolis

**Mississippi**

Belhaven  
Biloxi  
Brockhaven  
Canton  
Clinton  
Columbus  
Gulfport

Jackson  
Long Beach  
Louisville  
Lyman  
Mathiston  
Millsaps  
Moss Point

Ocean Springs  
Pascagoula  
Pass Christian  
Perkinston  
Philadelphia  
Raymond  
State College

Wesson  
West Point

**Montana**

Anaconda  
Butte

Deer Lodge  
Dillon

Helena

**New Hampshire**

Bakersville  
Bedford  
Derry

Goff's Falls  
Goffstown  
Manchester

New Boston  
Raymond  
Suncock

Weare

**New Jersey**

Alpha  
Asbury Park  
Belvidere  
Bernardsville  
Blairtown  
Bound Brook  
Collingswood  
Dumont

Dunellen  
Freehold  
Garfield  
Hackensack  
Hackettstown  
Haddon Heights  
Highland Park  
Jamesburg  
Keyport  
Lodi

Long Branch  
Matawan  
Merchantville  
New Brunswick  
N. Plainfield  
Oaklyn  
Oxford  
Paterson  
Perth Amboy

Pompton Lakes  
Raritan  
Red Bank  
Roselle Park  
S. Plainfield  
Washington  
Westfield

**New Mexico**

Albuquerque  
Belen

Bernalillo  
Española

Las Vegas  
Santa Fe

**New York**

Albany  
Albans

Glen Cove  
Gross

Lynbrook  
Niskayuna

Schenectady  
Scotia

*Auburn*  
*Buffalo*  
*Burnt Hills*  
*Garden City*

*Glenville*  
*Gloversville*  
*Hempstead*  
*Long Beach*

*New Rochelle*  
*Oceanside*  
*Rochester*  
*Saratoga Springs*

*Syracuse*  
*Utica*  
*White Plains*

### North Carolina

*Apex*  
*Archer Lodge*  
*Arthur*  
*Ayden*  
*Belvoir*  
*Benson*  
*Bethel*  
*Black Creek*  
*Brogden*  
*Cary*  
*Charlotte*  
*Chicod*  
*Clayton*  
*Cleveland*  
*Contentnea*  
*Corinth Holder*  
*Deep Run*  
*Elm City*  
*Eureka*

*Farmville*  
*Fountain*  
*Four Oaks*  
*Fremont*  
*Fuquay Springs*  
*Gardners*  
*Garner*  
*Glendale*  
*Goldsboro*  
*Grantham*  
*Green Hope*  
*Greenville*  
*Griston*  
*Grimesland*  
*Holly Springs*  
*Hookerton*  
*Kenly*  
*Kinston*

*Knightdale*  
*La Grange*  
*Lucama*  
*Maury*  
*Meadow*  
*Micro*  
*Millbrook*  
*Moss Hill*  
*Mount Olive*  
*Nahaunta*  
*Neednam*  
*Pactolus*  
*Pikeville*  
*Pine Level*  
*Pink Hill*  
*Princeton*  
*Raleigh-Hugh*  
*Rock Ridge*

*Rolesville*  
*Rosewood*  
*Saratoga*  
*Selma*  
*Seven Springs*  
*Smithfield*  
*Snow Hill*  
*Southwood*  
*Stantonsburg*  
*Stokes*  
*Wake Forest*  
*Wakelon*  
*Walstonburg*  
*Wendell*  
*Wheat Swamp*  
*Wilson*  
*Wilson Mills*  
*Winterville*

### North Dakota

*Fairmont*  
*Fargo*

*Kindred*  
*Mayville*

*Wahpeton*

### Ohio

*Dayton*

*Cincinnati*

### Oklahoma

*Ada*  
*Anadarko*

*Norman*  
*Oklahoma City*

*Pauls Valley*  
*Rurcell*

*Shawnee*  
*Tecumseh*

### Oregon

*Eugene*

*Oregon City*  
*Portland*  
*St. Helens*

*Salem*  
*Washington*

### Pennsylvania

*Aldon*  
*Boothwyn*  
*Chester City*

*Eddystone*  
*Folcroft*  
*Folsom*

*Linwood*  
*Marcus Hook*  
*Marple-Newton*

*State College*  
*Swarthmore*  
*Tyrone*



Clearfield  
Clifton Heights  
Collingdale  
Concordville  
Darby  
Delaware City

Glen Olden  
Holmes  
Lansdowne  
Lock Haven  
Leiperville  
Lewiston

Media  
Middletown  
Milmont  
Prospect Park  
Sharon Hill  
Springfield

Upland  
Upper Darby  
Woodlyn  
Yeadon

### Rhode Island

Barrington  
Bristol  
Cranston

Newport  
Pawtucket  
Providence

Warick  
Warren  
West Warick

Woonsocket

### South Carolina

Batesburg  
Blaney  
Blythewood  
Brookland-Coyce  
Camden  
Cameron  
Cedar Creek  
Chapin

Charleston  
Columbia  
Dentsville  
Gaffney  
Hyatt Park  
Irmo  
Kershaw  
Lancaster

Lexington  
Lone Star  
Lykesland  
Midway  
New Brookland  
Olympia  
Orangeburg  
Prosperity

St. Matthews  
Shandon  
Spartanburg  
Sumter  
Swansea  
West Columbia  
Whitmire  
Westville

### Tennessee

Apison  
Athens  
Birchwood  
Chattanooga

Coltawah  
Daisy  
Fairmont  
Hixon

Red Bank  
Sale Creek  
Signal Mountain  
Soddy

Tyner

### Texas

Austin  
Axtell  
Bruceville-Eddy  
Burbank  
CCC Camp No. 817  
Chilton  
Crawford

Edgewood  
Hawthorne  
Hillsboro  
Hot Wells  
Lanier  
La Vega  
Lorena

Lott  
Margil  
Marlin  
Mart  
McGregor  
Moody  
Page

Riessel  
San Antonio  
Speegleville  
Stafford  
Waco  
West  
Wheatley

### Utah

Bear River  
Brigham City  
Burch Creek

Hooper  
Huntsville  
Kaysville

Midvale  
Morgan  
Ogden

Plain City

### Vermont

Barre  
Bellows Falls  
Burlington  
Chester

Johnson  
Middlebury  
Milton  
Montpelier

Morrisville  
Randolph  
St. Albans  
St. Johnsbury

Springfield  
Vergennes  
White River  
Windsor

## FORUM PLANNING

## Virginia

Altavista  
AmherstAppomattox  
FarmvilleLynchburg  
Rustburg

## Washington

Camas  
BellinghamLongview  
SeattleVancouver  
Washougal

## West Virginia

Avery  
Blacksville  
Cagville  
DaybrookEvansdale  
Everettsville  
Fairview  
MorgantownOsage  
Riverside  
Sabraton  
SenecaStar City  
Wadestown  
Woodburn

## Wisconsin

Milwaukee

## Wyoming

Cheyenne

Guernsey

Tarrington

Wheatland



## Selected References on Forum Organization and Discussion Leadership

BOWMAN, LEROY E. How to lead discussion: A guide for the use of group leaders. New York, Woman's Press, 1934. 31 p.

Presents a simplified statement of the value of discussion methods, the job of the leader (characteristics, participation, etc.), preparation for meetings, general rules for conducting meetings, intervals between meetings, and possible pitfalls. A valuable manual for beginning groups.

BRYSON, LYMAN. Adult education. New York, American Book Co., 1936. 208 p.

This book has been used widely as a text in adult education courses and may be relied upon for an overview of the field at the present time with some reference to the philosophy underlying the present efforts, but with more attention to the specific practices by which adults can be taught, and programs of adult education organized and promoted.

DEBATIN, F. N. Administration of adult education. New York, American Book Co., 1938. 486 p.

This book is more than a text on administration. It provides well-documented discussions of the "why and wherefore" as well as the more practical problems of staff, equipment, publicity, and financing. Forums and adult civic education are dealt with only incidentally as part of a much broader program of community education. Treatment of special problems connected with forums on page 460 ff.

DENNY, GEORGE V., JR. A handbook for discussion leaders. New York, Town Hall, Advisory Service, 123 West 43rd St., 1938. 32 p.

This handbook has been prepared primarily for Town Meeting discussion groups. These listening groups organized throughout the country to share in the Town Meeting of the Air broadcasts every Thursday night must rely on local leadership for carrying on discussion after the broadcasts.

DEWEY, JOHN. How we think. Rev. ed. Boston, D. C. Heath and Co., 1933. 301 p.

If one of the major purposes of adult civic education is to improve the processes of critical thought and inquiry applied to public affairs, then the procedures of the forum should be constantly tested by the problem-solving process as contained in this book.

ELLIOTT, H. S. The process of group-thinking. New York, Associated Press, 347 Madison Avenue, 1932. 225 p.

This has been called a "how" book. It is a complete and detailed study of the technique of discussion, full of helpful suggestions of what to do, and what not to do. It is especially valuable for group leaders and for those working with young people of senior high school or college age.

ELY, MARY, ed. Adult education in action. New York, American Association for Adult Education, 1936. 480 p.

Adult education in action deals with the varying philosophies and practices of the American movement. It consists of some 100 articles, all of which have appeared from time to time in the *Journal of Adult Education*.

FANSLER, THOMAS. Teaching adults by discussion. New York, Service Bureau for Adult Education, New York University, 1938. 39 p.

Chapters 4, 5, and 6 of this bulletin will be particularly helpful to the inexperienced discussion leader. Getting the discussion started, making it meaningful, and handling "difficult" persons are treated.

GARLAND, J. V. and PHILLIPS, CHARLES F. Discussion methods. New York, H. W. Wilson Co., 1938. 330 p.

Contributes not only descriptions of various discussion methods now in use, but also verbatim reports of actual meeting situations in which the method described was used.

HERRING, JOHN W. and OSMAN, LEO T. Forums and a community-forum program. New York, New York University, Division of General Education, 1936. 40 p.

Pages 12-16 of this bulletin are particularly helpful in enlisting community support and sponsorship for a forum series. The program details, the successful chairmanship of a forum and the importance of physical arrangements in the meeting place are also discussed.

INSTITUTE FOR PROPAGANDA ANALYSIS, INC. Group leader's guide to propaganda analysis. New York, Institute for Propaganda Analysis, Inc., 130 Morningside Drive, 1938. 271 p.

Based upon the experience of the institute cooperating with adult groups and high-school and college classes, this guide attempts to suggest techniques and methods through which propaganda may be recognized and dealt with and habits of critical thinking developed. It should be used in conjunction with the monthly bulletins on propaganda analysis issued by the Institute.

JUDSON, LYMAN SPICER and JUDSON, ELLEN. Modern group discussion. New York, The H. W. Wilson Co., 1937. 198 p.

Chapter 7 contains a complete description of the types of discussion meetings currently in use. Chapter 8 contains some helpful suggestions on stimulating group discussion particularly with reference to the possible use of mimeographed texts with which to begin the consideration of a problem.

MUELLER, A. D. Principles and methods in adult education. New York, Prentice-Hall, Inc., 1937. 428 p.

Designed as a textbook for a college course in adult education methods. This book will also be useful to in-service teachers and discussion leaders. Special attention is called to Chapter 8 on the Leader of group discussion and Chapter 9 which contains a detailed description of the elements present in a successful panel discussion.

NATIONAL EDUCATION ASSOCIATION, DEPARTMENT OF SECONDARY-SCHOOL PRINCIPALS. Talking it through; A Manual for discussion groups. Washington, D. C., Department of Secondary-School Principals, 1201 16th St., N.W., 1938. 70 p.

This manual, prepared by the staff of the Discussion group project of the Department of secondary school principals, is designed primarily to assist local leaders in conducting discussions of educational policies and issues. Chapter 5—A Group at work, and Chapter 6—The Art of discussion, have general utility in other types of discussion programs.

NEW YORK UNIVERSITY. SCHOOL OF EDUCATION. DEPARTMENT OF ADULT EDUCATION. Community planning in adult education. New York, New York University, 1938. 66 p.

A practical handbook for administering classes for adults dealing with such subjects as: Determining community needs and interests, planning the program, financing the program, and measuring accomplishments.

PENNSYLVANIA. DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC INSTRUCTION. Increased social opportunity through community planning. Harrisburg, Pa., Department of Public Instruction, 1936. 36 p.

This bulletin suggests plans for organizing and directing a community council for education and recreation. It is based upon much practical experience in the organization of such councils in Pennsylvania, and outlines the community resources which may be drawn upon in organizing such a program in which public forums would constitute one of many types of activities.

ROWDEN, DOROTHY, ed. Handbook for adult education in United States. New York, American Association for Adult Education, 1936. 423 p.

Lists more than 1,000 national and local organizations engaged in adult education, with the name and address of a responsible officer and a note covering the program. Thirty-seven factual articles on the various types of adult education, including the Federal emergency educational program schools for adults, the training of leaders and teachers of adults, university and college extension, libraries and adult education, etc.



— **PUBLICITY FOR ADULT EDUCATION.** New York, Service Bureau for Adult Education, New York University, 1937. 27 p.

Without special reference to forums or public-affairs discussion programs the general suggestions contained in this bulletin will be helpful to the inexperienced in planning community-wide publicity for adult civic education programs. The suggestions with reference to newspaper relationships are particularly helpful.

**STUDEBAKER, JOHN W.** The American way. New York, McGraw-Hill Co., 1935. 206 p.

An account of the community-wide adult civic education developed in the Des Moines public forums. Intended for those "interested in improving the American way of making social progress," giving many suggestions concerning the work of leaders of forums, as well as subjects for discussion, instructions to panel members, and samples of study guides.

**UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE.** Extension service. What is the discussion leader's job? Washington, United States Department of Agriculture, 1937. 21 p. (Bulletin D-3)

Written primarily with a view to assisting leaders of farm discussion groups, this bulletin contains many helpful suggestions for planning and leading discussions in other situations as well. The type of meeting dealt with is the small discussion group of from 15 to 20 members using informal discussion procedures.

**UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR.** Office of education. CHOOSING OUR WAY. Washington, United States Government Printing Office, 1938. 118 p. (Bulletin, 1937, Misc. No. 1).

This illustrated publication presents an analysis of the programs in 19 demonstration centers and a survey of 431 other forums in the United States. The material included covers the history, management, promotion, and financing of public forums.

— **EDUCATION FOR DEMOCRACY.** Washington, United States Government Printing Office, 1936. 74 p. (Bulletin, 1938, No. 17).

A handbook for forum leaders and managers devoted mainly to techniques and methods. Presents briefly factual material on Des Moines and other forums. Contains a bibliography on forums and public discussions.

— **FORUMS FOR YOUNG PEOPLE.** Washington, United States Government Printing Office, 1938. 113 p. (Bulletin, 1937, No. 25).

A study of forum programs in high schools and colleges and for out-of-school youth, the data having been collected from questionnaires sent to schools and colleges. Material is included relating to use of forums in secondary schools and colleges in the United States and the methods used in sponsorship and organization.

— **PRINTED PAGE AND THE PUBLIC PLATFORM.** Washington, United States Government Printing Office, 1938. 100 p. (Bulletin, 1937, No. 27).

The relation of reading to discussion and of libraries to forums is shown in this handbook. For those interested in promoting library use in connection with forums, this bulletin will prove of value.

— **PUBLIC AFFAIRS PAMPHLETS.** Washington, United States Government Printing Office, 1937. 83 p. (Bulletin, 1937, No. 3).

An index of the numerous pamphlets published under different auspices in the field of public forums. A short description is given of the contents of each publication in addition to its title, author, publisher and price.

— (Supplement No. 1). Washington, United States Government Printing Office, 1937. 67 p. (Bulletin, 1937, No. 3, Supplement No. 1).

A listing of 500 recent pamphlets which have been added to the previous index.

**WALSER, FRANK.** The art of conference. New York, Harper and Brothers, 1933. 305 p.

This book supplies both the principles and methods of increasing the practical value and usefulness of all conference activities, whether in small or large groups. It is a guide to the practice of conference procedure founded on principles based on a wide contact with experts in Europe and America. The various points are illustrated by an analysis of actual discussions.